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# HISTORY

OF

# THE GIRONDISTS;

OR,

## Personal Memoirs of the Patriots

OF

## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

FROM UNPUBLISHED SOURCES.

BY

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE,

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC,

Author of "Travels in the Holy Land," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. III.

TRANSLATED BY H. T. RYDE.

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1848.

# MEMOIR OF M. DE LAMARTINE.

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE was born at Macon in France on the 21st of October, 1790. His family name was De Prat, but he subsequently assumed that of Lamartine, after a maternal uncle, from whom he inherited a considerable fortune. His father was major of a regiment of cavalry under Louis XVI., and his mother was grand-daughter of Madame Des Roys, under-governess to the Princess d'Orleans. Thus attached to the ancien régime, the Lamartine family were necessarily deeply involved by the French Revolution, and the poet's earliest recollections are of a gloomy prison-house, in which he visited his father. His mother (who died the victim to a terrible accident) and his father, escaping the dangers of the period, retired to an obscure retreat near Milly, where the earliest years of the subject of our sketch were passed. The recollection of the domestic serenity of his youth has never been effaced from his mind: and many times in after life, as poet and traveller, he has evoked the well remembered images of this humble roof at Milly, with its "seven linden trees," his aged father, his mother and sisters, and all the grand and quiet scenery, so well calculated to excite and feed the imagination of a young, highly gifted, and reflective mind.

In his first chapter of "Travels in the East," in 1832–33, he says:—"My mother had received from her mother, when on her death-bed, a handsome Bible of Royaumont *, from which she taught me to read when I was very young. This Bible had engravings of sacred subjects at nearly every page. When I had read about half a page with tolerable correctness, my mother allowed me to see a picture: and, placing the book open on her knees, she explained the subject to me as a recompence for my progress. She was most tender and affectionate by nature, and the impressive and solemn tone of her clear and silvery voice added to all she said an accent of strength, impressiveness, and love, which still resounds in my ears after six years that that voice has, alas! been mute."

It was under such influences that young Lamartine was educated until he left his native roof for the College of the Pères du Foi, at Belley, where the religious germs implanted by his mother were luxuriantly developed in the melancholy retirement of the cloister: and his beautiful episode of *Jocelyn* is full of reminiscences borrowed from his calm and austere life in the house of the Holy Fathers.

On leaving college, M. de Lamartine passed some time at Lyons, whence he made his first brief visit to Italy, returning to Paris in the latter days of the empire. Brought up in detestation of Napoleon, he entered the world without very well knowing the course he was destined to take; at a distance from his mother and the watchful eyes of his fatherly preceptors, he passed some time, if not in actual dissipation, yet in that idleness which frequently characterises the earlier days of men who are subsequently destined for a conspicuous and influential career. He did not neglect his severer studies, but he partook of the amusements which his age creates and enjoys; wandering with his friends in the wood of Vincennes, full of visionary dreams of literary fame, and especially of dramatic glory, enjoying the occasional society of Talma, who took pleasure in hearing Lamartine recite, in his melancholy and sonorous tones, unpublished fragments of a tragedy entitled *Saul.*

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* The assumed name under which M. de Saci published his "History of the Old and New Testaments."

In 1813 the poet re-visited Italy, where many of his *Méditations* were inspired by the "land of song and sunny skies;" and one of the deepest inspirations of his *Harmonies,* called *First Love,* would make us believe in some soft and early mystery of the heart buried beneath the tomb.

On the fall of the emperor, Lamartine offered his services and his sword to the restored family, whose race had had the allegiance and blood of his ancestors, and he joined the body guard of the royal family in 1815.

Jules Janin, the celebrated critic and reviewer, asserts that it was whilst on duty one night beneath the king's windows at the palace of St. Cloud, that Lamartine first yielded to the inspirations of poetry, composing verses which he next day committed to paper. After the hundred days, Lamartine retired from military service and completed his first *Méditations Poëtiques,* whose inspirations are mainly drawn from some lady-love, adored with all the ardour of a first passion, but of whom he was bereft by the hand of death, and bewails under the name of *Elvire.* In 1820, when poetry was but little appreciated in France, which had been crammed to satiety with the mythologic platitudes of the Voltairean school of versification, Lamartine—just recovering from a violent attack of illness, resulting mainly from mental excitement, which so often, whilst it impairs the frame, purifies and exalts the imagination,—went from bookseller to bookseller in Paris, offering a small volume in verse, and every where meeting with refusal, until at length one of the trade, named Nicolo, resolved on printing these *Méditations.* The volume was published at half a crown, without name, preface, or introduction, and would unquestionably have fallen still-born from the press, but that Jules Janin,—then (1820) young, though known to fame,—seeing the unpretending brochure on a book-stall, bought it, and carried it home. "Never," says this celebrated writer, "shall I forget my delight as I perused this volume of a nameless poet! For what was my surprise and admiration when suddenly my dazzled eyes and heart devoured this new world of poesy! when at length they found combined in one book all the sentiments of the soul and all the passions of the heart; all the joys of earth, and all the ecstasies of heaven; all the hopes of the present and all the doubts which shadow the future. Behold, at length, I said to myself, a poet uniting in his verses all the most opposite conditions of poetry,—enthusiasm and calmness, devotion and love."

Again J. Janin says: "There is high matter for a poet's powers in the crumbling of thrones, and the fall of men like ears in harvest; but it is a far loftier task to float in imagination over all those battle-fields, and question the emancipated spirits wandering above their unburied forms."

So charmed, indeed, was Janin with his *Premières Méditations*, that he wrote a long and careful review of them, in a publication of wide circulation with which he was then connected. Thus the notice of literary cotemporaries was called to the volume. A large demand was at once created for the poems, and Lamartine, like Byron, whom he in many respects resembles, "awoke one morning and found himself famous."

Charles Nodier, one of the celebrated modern critics of France, attributes Lamartine's literary popularity to the analogy between the poetry which the author writes and the feelings of the age in which he lives; but we venture to think that it was the novelty of the style and subjects, — the entire contrast to all that had preceded him (except Byron), — the melancholy which does not degenerate into affectation, — the vagueness of idea which is yet not obscure, — the terseness of the rhyme and the melody of the rhythm, — which gave Lamartine his well-earned and well-sustained reputation; and thus in four years forty-five thousand copies of the *Méditations* were spread over the literary world, and Lamartine was ranked with Byron, Goethe, and Chateaubriand.

Janin then made his friendship; and as he was the cause of his fame, so has he always been his warm champion and most equitable critic.

Lamartine was always an avowed admirer of Byron; and when that great bard died, leaving his "Childe Harold" incomplete, Lamartine resolved to add a canto, and *Le Dernier Chant du Pélerinage de Harold* was favourably received by all lovers of the two poets, — the great majority of readers in Europe. This poem is, notwithstanding its name and avowed purpose, an original composition. "In fact," says Janin, "Lamartine's own fancy carries him away so decidedly, that it would be in vain for him to attempt to try to imitate any poet or poem; he is too powerfully governed by his own nature, and his inspiration comes upon him with resistless force."

His literary success, the most brilliant of the age after Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, opened a diplomatic career to Lamartine; and, appointed *attaché* to the legation of Florence, he went to Tuscany, where, in 1821, it is said he heard a strange, but tender and melodious voice, murmuring in his ear this quotation from his own *Méditations*: —

> "Peut-être l'avenir me gardait-il encore,
> Un retour de bonheur dont l'espoir est perdu;
> Peut-être dans la foule une âme que j'ignore
> Aurait compris mon âme et m'aurait répondu."*

The poet *was* understood. A second Elvire appeared in the form of a young, rich, and well-connected English lady, whom he married in 1821, at Naples, where he was appointed secretary to the French embassy. He afterwards visited London in the same capacity, returning to Tuscany as *chargé d'affaires.* In the meanwhile his fortune was increased by an inheritance derived from his opulent uncle; but neither diplomacy, nor the splendours of an aristocratic life, could distract Lamartine from his love and cultivation of poetry.

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* "Perchance the future may reserve for me
A happiness, whose hope I now resign;
Perchance amid the busy world may be
Some soul unknown responsive still to mine!

The *Secondes Méditations* appeared in 1823, and to these were accorded higher praise than even to the first; especially to his *Ode to Bonaparte*, *Sappho*, *Préludes*, and the *Dying Poet;* then followed his sketch *Socrates*, and then (in order of publication) the *Last Canto of Childe Harold*, to which we have already alluded. In this poem there is a splendid address to Italy, in which the poet laments in lofty language the degradation of this land of heroes, and says, in conclusion: —

> "Je vais chercher ailleurs (pardonne, ombre Romaine !)
> Des hommes, et non pas de la poussière humaine !" *

This apostrophe appearing to Colonel Guillaume Pepé (brother of Joseph Pepé, the Neapolitan general,) offensive to his nation, he called out Lamartine, whom he met at a party; and the poet was dangerously wounded, and his life hung long on a thread. Notwithstanding, he wrote to the Grand Duke, with whom he was on close terms of intimacy, requesting that Pepé might not be punished, — a request which that prince accorded; and this chivalrous conduct acquired for Lamartine the highest admiration in all the circles of Florence.

Having in 1824 published *Le Chant du Sacre*, he returned to France in 1829; and in the month of May in the same year his *Harmonies Poëtiques Religieuses* appeared, — a work of high imaginings, and combining all the superior qualities of highly intellectual poesy.

M. de Lamartine was received as member of the *Académie Française*, in April, 1830, and was about to set forth as Minister Plenipotentiary to Africa, when the Revolution of July broke out. The bolt fell that shattered the insecure and unpopular throne of the House of Bourbon. Lamartine paid his final and honest adieus to the ex-king, Charles X., and, although Louis Philippe offered to confirm him in his Greek embassy, he refused the offer, and bade adieu to diplomacy, as he believed, for ever. "By the family and services of my father," he wrote to a friend, "I belong to Charles X.; by the family and services of my mother, I belong to the House of Orleans." In another man this might have been deemed affectation; but with Lamartine it was the utmost sincerity.

This tribute paid to the great unfortunate, Lamartine threw himself into the new path opened to ardent and active minds by the Revolution of July.

"The past is but a dream," he said: "we may regret it, but we must not lose the day in weeping fruitlessly over it. It is always allowable — always honourable — to sympathise in the misfortune of another; but we need not gratuitously take any share of a fault which we have not committed. We must enter again into the ranks of citizens — to think, speak, act, struggle with the family of families — our country!"

His first essay to be returned as *Deputé* was marked by a check. The electors of Toulon and Dunkirk both rejected him, and some time afterwards he resolved on putting into execution a project he had all his life contemplated, and, on the 20th of May, 1832, he freighted, at Marseilles, *L'Alceste*, a vessel of two hundred and fifty tons, with a crew of sixteen men. It was during this voyage to the East, that Lamartine kept his Journal, afterwards reproduced under the title of *Le Voyage en Orient.* It is replete with beautiful passages, remarkable events, and *singular predictions.* The East was ever the land of prophecy.

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* "I seek elsewhere (forgive, O Roman shade !)
For men, and not the dust of which they 're made."

In an early passage, dated July, he says — "The hour is approaching in which the Pharos of reason and morality will be illumined in our political tempests, to give the proper form to the new social symbol of which the world begins to have a foresight and comprehension: the symbol of love and charity amongst all men, which may be styled gospel politics. I do not reproach myself with any egotism in this respect, as for this duty I would have relinquished even this journey — this dream of my imagination for the last sixteen years. Oh, that Heaven may regenerate mankind, for our politics are a scandal to man, and make the angels weep! Destiny gives one hour in an age for humanity to regenerate itself: *that hour is a revolution; and men suffer it to escape them whilst tearing each other to pieces; they sacrifice to their spirit of vengeance the hour assigned by God for regeneration and progressive improvement!*" We should willingly give ample space to the consideration of, and extracts from, this very remarkable work; but we must limit ourselves to some quotations from the interview between Lamartine and Lady Esther Stanhope, in September, 1832, at her residence, in an almost inaccessible solitude, in one of the mountains of Lebanon, near Saida, the ancient Sidon. Her abode was formerly a convent, near the village of Dgioun, inhabited by the Druses, all surrounded by one wall, like the fortifications of the middle ages.

Lady Esther Stanhope herself believed — and many believed with her — that she possessed a knowledge of astrology; and her interview with Lamartine is certainly extraordinary. When she offered to reveal his future destiny to the poet, whom she saw for the first time, and neither knew his reputation, nor even his name, he replied: —

"In regard to the future, I only believe in God and virtue."

She replied: — "No matter: believe what you please; I see evidently that you are born under the influence of three fortunate, powerful, and good stars; that you are gifted with analogous powers, which conduct you to one aim; which I could, if you were willing, point out to you at once. It is God who has conducted you hither, to enlighten your soul; you are one of those men of a good disposition, *whom he requires as his instruments to accomplish the marvellous works which he will soon accomplish amongst mankind.*"

* * * * * *

"Let your religious belief be what it may," she continued, "you are not the less one of those men whom I expected, whom Providence has sent to me, *and who has a great part to perform in the world that is preparing.* In a short time you will return to Europe. The fate of Europe is decided. *France alone has a great mission to accomplish* — YOU WILL PARTICIPATE IN IT! I do not yet know in what manner; but if you be anxious to know, I will consult the stars to-night, and reveal it to you. I do not yet know the name of all; I see now three, at present — four — perhaps five, and there may be more. One of them is certainly Mercury, which imparts clearness and colour to the mind and tongue. You must be a poet; it is legible in your eyes, and in the upper part of your countenance. Lower down, you are under the influence of very different stars, almost in opposition; there is an influence of energy and action."

"What is your name?"

"I told her."

"I never heard it before," she said, with an accent of truth.

"Ah, my lady, you see what human glory is. In my life I have composed a few verses, which have caused my name to be repeated a thousand times by all the literary echoes of Europe; but even that echo is too feeble to cross your ocean and your mountains."

* * * * * *

She said: "It would grieve me much to include you in the number of those young Frenchmen, who raise the popular fury against all the dignities which God, nature, and society have formed, and who overthrow the edifice, in order to construct with its ruins a pedestal for the envious baseness of their extraction."

I replied: "I belong to the class of men who do not despise those who are below them in society, at the same time that they respect those above them, the desire or dream of whom it may be to invite all men, independently of their stations in the arbitrary hierarchies of politics, to the same light of knowledge, the same liberty, and the same moral perfection."

M. de Lamartine's estimate of Napoleon is worth quoting from this work: — "Bonaparte was no doubt a reconstructor: he formed anew the social world, but did not sufficiently regard the materials with which he re-composed it. He moulded his statue with clay and personal interests, instead of constructing it of divine and moral sentiments — of virtue and liberty."

On leaving Lady Stanhope, the poet-traveller advanced through one of the remarkable vallies of Lebanon; and the following extract is a fair specimen of the descriptive and impressive style which pervades this remarkable production, replete in richness of language, elevation of idea, freshness of images, and a rapid succession of interesting and stirring incidents: —

"After a ride of two hours we reached a deeper, narrower, and more picturesque valley than any we had yet traversed. Right and left arose, like two perpendicular ramparts, three or four hundred feet high, two chains of mountains, which appeared to have been recently separated from each other by a blow from the Great Framer of worlds, or perhaps by the earthquake which shook Lebanon to its foundation, when the Son of Man, rendering up his soul to God, not far from these mountains, gave that last sigh which repelled the spirit of error, oppression, and falsehood, and breathed virtue, liberty, and life into a renovated world. Gigantic blocks, loosened from each side of the mountains, and scattered like pebbles by the hands of children into the stream, formed the horrid, deep, vast, and rugged bed of this dried-up torrent; some of whose stones were masses higher and larger than the loftiest houses. Some rested solidly on their bases, like solid and everlasting cubes; some, suspended by their angles, and supported by the pressure of other invisible rocks, seemed as though still in the act of falling, and rolling downwards, presenting the appearance of ruin in action — a perpetual falling, a chaos of stones, an endless avalanche of rocks—rocks of sombre, gray, black, streaked with flame colour and white opaque — the petrified waves of a granite flood: not one drop of water in the deep interstices of this bed, calcined by the burning sun of Syria; not a blade of grass, a stalk, or creeping plant, either in the torrent or in the cracked and abrupt declivities on each side of the abyss. It was an ocean of stones, a cataract of rocks, to which the diversity of their forms, the variety of their positions, the singularity of their appearances, the play of light and shade on their sides and surfaces, seemed to impart to them motion and fluidity. If Dante had desired to depict in one of the departments of his Hell, the hell of stones — the hell of barrenness, ruin, the crash of matter, the dissolution of worlds, the decay of ages, — he needed but to have simply copied this scene, and it would have been a perfect model! It is a river of the last hours of the world, when all shall have been consumed by fire, and when the earth, revealing its bowels, shall be nothing but a mutilated block of calcined stones, beneath the feet of the terrible Judge who shall come to visit it. We followed this valley of lamentations for two hours without any variation in the scene than that arising from the circuitous route which the torrent itself took amongst the mountains, or by the manner, more or less striking, with which the rocks were grouped in their foaming stony bed.

"This valley will never be effaced from my imagination. This country must have been the primitive land — the land of tragic poesy, and human lamentations; the pathetic and lofty strain of prophecies is felt here in its wild, pathetic, and lofty nature. All the images of biblical poetry are engraved in imposing characters on the furrowed surface of Lebanon and its gilded summits, its vallies, through which the streams peacefully flow — vallies mute and lifeless. The divine spirit, the superhuman inspiration, which has passed over the souls and the harps of the poetic nation, to whom God spake by symbols and images, thus struck more forcibly the eyes of bards devoted to God from their infancy, and nourished them with a sustenance more invigorating than that on which we feed; we, the wasted and aged heirs of the harp of antiquity, who have only before our eyes nature, mild, beautiful, and cultivated — nature civilized but withered, as we are ourselves."

At the end of November, Lamartine returned, after many wanderings, to Beyrouth, where he had left his wife and child Julia; and in the beginning of December he lost this

"Sole daughter of his house and heart,"

after an illness of two days only, when it was fondly supposed that her health, hitherto delicate, was being restored by the air of Asia. She died in the arms of her father and mother, in the country-house, in the vicinity of Beyrouth, in which they were domiciled for the winter. The vessel which Lamartine had sent back to Europe was not to return until May ensuing, then to take up the travellers somewhere on the coast of Syria. They remained six months in the Lebanon, overwhelmed by this severe affliction. In the month of May *L'Alceste* arrived; but M. de Lamartine, to spare his wife the pang of returning in the same vessel that had brought them to Asia, with the beloved child they had lost, freighted another barque, the *Sophie* on board of which he, his lady, and travelling companions embarked for France, whilst the body of the deceased daughter, which had been embalmed, for the purpose of conveying it to Saint-Point, where she had expressed her dying wishes to be interred, was confided to *L'Alceste.*

The journal was not resumed for four months after the death of the lost and lamented Julia; and he writes: — "At break of day, on the 15th of April, 1833, we quitted the house in which Julia had embraced us for the last time and left us for heaven. I kissed the floor of her chamber a thousand times, and steeped it with my tears, for it is to me a sainted relic. I still beheld her in every part of it."

We have already briefly alluded to Lamartine's political aspirations, and his want of success with the constituencies of Toulon and Dunkirk. He learnt, however, when at Jerusalem, that he had been elected deputy for the Department of the North. These new duties called him to France; and now commenced his political career.

It was on the 4th of January, 1834, that he first appeared in the tribune, in a discussion on the Address. His friends and admirers had been in much anxiety as to his course as a politician, and his success as an orator. It was not believed that a mind so keenly sensitive, so highly imaginative, and, at this time, doubly so, whilst under the deepest loss an affectionate nature can endure, and full of all the impressions which his sojourn in the romantic and impressive clime of the East could not fail to make on a poetic and impassioned fancy. It was not credited that he could narrow his mind to party brawls and discussions — that his towering spirit would descend from "its pride of place," and mingle with the squabbles of the Chamber, or in calculations on the quantity of oil exported, or the amount of sugar extracted annually from home-grown beet-root.

But they were soon reassured by the master-mind of the new deputy; the poet and the statesman ascended the tribune together; and his indefatigable friend Janin writes, in reference to his style of eloquence: "That fine language of his, even in dealing with business interests, remained still a language apart. He won at once universal admiration by his rapid glance over a subject, and his simple mode of arriving at the point; but more than all, by that sustained and natural tone of eloquence which, born of the noblest emotions of the heart, swept on, scattering around it in its course the precious treasures of a vast and exalted understanding. De Lamartine, from the high place of the national tribune, spoke of humanity, tolerance, and charity, and of the fraternal bond which links men and nations with a heartfelt earnestness, which conciliated all the sympathies of all who listened."

Another critic said of him, "He flings over the Chamber of Deputies some of the rays of his poetical crown."

Lamartine soon became a valuable member of the Chamber of Deputies; and although very attentive to his parliamentary duties, did not neglect the worship of his earlier years. In 1835 he published his poem of *Jocelyn*,—a splendid portraiture of feelings sacrificed to duty. In this he used, for the first time, dramatic form and modern history; and the work is deservedly popular.

Then followed *La Chute d'un Ange*,—a second episode, inspired by his Eastern reminiscences and impulses; but this had not the popularity of his previous productions. Then his *Recueillements Poëtiques* were published, remarkable for its preface, in which the author vilipends poetry when it is made more than the relaxation of busy life; pitying those who make it the sole occupation of existence, then idle and useless, because social labour is the daily and obligatory duty of every man whose lot is cast in with the perils and benefits of society.

On entering upon his functions as deputy, M. de Lamartine joined the Conservatives, then headed by Guizot. A dissolution of the Chamber taking place, he was elected representative of Mâcon, the place of his birth, and his name and influence as a politician rapidly increased. On all questions relative to the East he displayed an intimate acquaintance with the diplomacy exercised, the actual position of men and things, and frequently developed his views, based on a new system of policy, which he urged upon the cabinets of Europe. He argued strongly and chivalrously against the penalty of death (we shall presently see his earnestness when power was in his hands), and in a celebrated impromptu speech defended classical studies against the charges brought against them by the able champion for scientific pursuits — Arago. Lamartine gradually formed and headed a party in the Chamber, which was styled the "*Parti Social;*" and he taking a lead soon went in advance of Guizot on the progress of social questions; thus when the Conservative party became stationary, or in reality retrograded, the poet-statesman still advanced, until he was borne by the rapid progress of events from royalism to republicanism, — the results, we fully believe, of the most complete sincerity and perfect conviction. He disapproved of the course pursued by the king Louis Philippe and his ministers, and frequently, as a friend to order as well as good government, animadverted upon their want of faith, their resistance to progress, their utter ignorance of the state of society, and their rash determination to make no timely concessions to the wants and requirements of the people, and of the folly, as well as inutility, of thinking to check the movement which the intelligence of society had begun, which, properly controlled, would strengthen the state, but which repulsed would crush king, throne, and institutions beneath its vast and overwhelming progress.

In his *Voyage en Orient*, he thus presented his practical system to the social world: —

"You say that every thing dies, and that there is no longer any faith or belief;—there is a faith; this faith is general reason; language is its organ, the press is its apostle: it seeks to re-construct in its own image religions, civilizations, societies, and legislations. It seeks in religion, God, one and perfect, as its dogma; eternal morality as its symbol; adoration and charity as its worship: in politics, humanity above all nationalities; in legislation man equal to man, men the brothers of men, — *legislative Christianity.*"

The latest published production of M. de Lamartine's literary pen has been *L'Histoire des Girondins*, which we now present to our readers in an English dress. It is written with remarkable ability, and with an impartiality which the most bigoted cannot fail to recognise. A thorough knowledge of the subject has been aided by that spirit of philosophy, that power of analysis, and that keenness of penetration which are characteristics of the gifted writer; whilst access to hitherto unpublished documents, and private details, not before communicated, have enabled M. de Lamartine to compose a historical work, which must take its place in every library, and become the text-book for facts, as it is an example of purity, fire, and that poetry of style which mark and dignify the parliamentary orations of the writer. An unaffected reverence for the Deity, and an unswerving love and observance of the truth, are every where conspicuous in the work as in the author; the work has been widely criticised all over Europe, and as universally approved.

It does not come within our province here to analyse or criticise the volumes in detail; but we may refer to the impressive manner in which the writer has narrated the history of Charlotte Corday, and the care he has bestowed on the delineation of Robespierre, – his evident earnestness to state nothing but the truth; his desire to place that remarkable man in all the phases of his character — domestic, social, and political, enthusiastic and constant, self-denying and sanguinary — before the reader, so that "nothing may be extenuated nor aught set down in malice."

It has been stated that M. de Lamartine is engaged on a *Histoire des Constituants*, which, chronologically (from 1789 to 1791), would precede *L'Histoire des Girondins.* The character of Mirabeau, which he has but lightly and referentially sketched in the first volume of *L'Histoire des Girondins*, will give ample scope to his lucid, perspicuous, and emphatic style, and masterly delineation.

There is announced for immediate publication, in "La Presse," a new work by M. dé Lamartine, to be intitled *Confidences*, and which purports to be the autobiography of the illustrious author. A translation of this work will be published in the "Standard Library," of which the *History of the Girondists* forms three volumes, and the production will be unquestionably one of deep interest, especially if the writer adds an Appendix of the recent events in France, of which *quorum pars magna fui*, may well form the epigraph.

This Memoir, however brief in quantity and scanty in materials, would be more incomplete if we failed to add a sketch of the Revolution of February 23, 24, 25, and 26, 1848, in Paris, and more particularly of the prominent part assumed by M. de Lamartine.

The government of France, led by M. Guizot, interdicted reform banquets in Paris. The opposition deputies, — amongst whom Odilon Barrot was the most conspicuous, and who assuredly contemplated nothing at most but a change of ministry which should place M. Thiers or Count Molé, one or both, at the head of affairs — still determined on having this banquet, which had been postponed from Sunday 20th, to Tuesday, 22nd of February, and it was announced to take place in the Champs Elysées. To this the government intended to offer no resistance, beyond placing a peace officer at the entrance, who, having formally objected to the meeting, was then to withdraw, and ministers intended to bring the legality or illegality of such meeting before the Law Courts. Before this, the managing committee issued a fresh programme, by which the deputies were to meet in the Place de la Madeleine between 11 and 12 o'clock, and the other guests in the Place de la Concorde, and thence to proceed to the place appointed. Ten thousand national guards, in uniform but unarmed, were to line the route in double file to the Arc de Triômphe at the further extremity of the Champs Elysées. It was also announced that only one toast would be given, "Reform and the right of Meeting," introduced by a short address from Odilon Barrot. The meeting and the national guard were then to disperse. On Sunday the guests amounted to two thousand, including eleven peers and one hundred deputies, magistrates, members of councils-general, and provincial deputations from the schools of law and medicine, &c.

On Monday evening, however, the utmost excitement prevailed, by the announcement in the Chamber of Deputies that the government had resolved on prohibiting the banquet; and a proclamation, signed by the prefect of police, prohibiting all assemblies, was placarded through the capital. In issuing these orders, the government declared that the committee, by directing the national guard to line the streets and to march in procession with officers at their head, had contravened the law, as no one but their superior officer or the minister could give such orders. It was also illegal to arrange a procession of the students.

General Jacqueminot, commandant of the national guard, also issued a proclamation, prohibiting their attendance at the banquet, unless called upon by their chiefs.

On Tuesday morning (22d) the committee of the banquet published a manifesto, renouncing the meeting, recommending at the same time order and submission. Meanwhile the opposition deputies declared their intention of impeaching the cabinet, and that if that motion were negatived, they would resign their functions as deputies.

The garrisons of Paris were increased to 100,000 men.

At an early hour of Tuesday morning troops were in motion in every direction; and in the Place de la Concorde (now, once again, Place de la Revolution) was a body of 5000 or 6000 individuals, who retired quietly before a body of chasseurs, singing the "*Marseillaise*," and crying "*Vive la Reforme!*" "*A bas Guizot!*" "*A bas l'Homme de Gand.*"

This body, about 11 o'clock, went in a dense mass, singing the "*Marseillaise*," to the hotel of M. Guizot, where they threw stones, and made a vast uproar. A body of municipal guard entered the court-yard, where they deliberately loaded their guns.

In the Rue St. Denis, Rue St. Martin, and other places, the people began to form barricades, and rencontres ensued between the troops and the people, some of whom were wounded.

The markets, the Place de la Concorde, the Place du Carrousel, the Boulevards, the Rue St. Honoré, and an immense number of other streets and places were occupied by the troops — in fact, the whole of Paris was occupied as if civil war had been everywhere raging. The troops remained under arms all night.

During the night all the barricades thrown up were demolished.

On Wednesday large numbers of the populace were under arms, and rebuilding the barricades. Some skirmishes took place. At eleven o'clock a body of the municipal guard were about to charge a group of inoffensive citizens, when the third legion of the national guard interfered, and prevented the shedding of blood.

The Place Carrousel, the Place de la Concorde, thebridges, and every other place in the neighbourhood of the Tuileries, were crowded with troops, and 40 pieces of cannon were on the Esplanade of the Hôtel des Invalides.

At three o clock a deputation of the officers of the national guard went to the Tuileries, to demand that the ministry should be dismissed, when they were told by General Jacqueminot, their commander, that the ministry had given in its resignation.

The intelligence of the resignation of the ministry spread like wildfire through the city, and was everywhere received with every demonstration of joy.

The Chamber of Deputies met on Wednesday. The members of the Left mustered strong.

M. Guizot said that the King had that moment sent for Count Molé, to charge him with the reconstruction of a cabinet. While the present ministers continued in office (added M. Guizot), they would cause order to be respected. The sitting was then closed.

On Thursday morning it was evident that the change of ministry would not satisfy the people; and the King was required to abdicate in favour of the Count de Paris, under the regency of the Duchess of Orleans. The regency of the Duke de Nemours would not be listened to. After this it was notified that M. Odilon Barrot had been commissioned to form a ministry, but there soon followed a proclamation that the King had abdicated. All the military posts on the left bank of the Seine were disarmed and occupied by national guards and men of the people. The troops having evacuated the Tuileries, the palace was immediately occupied by the insurgents, who seized on the throne, which was carried in procession through the streets, and ultimately smashed to pieces. A complete sack took place at the Palais Royal, the private property of Louis Philippe, and all the furniture was taken out and burned.

A provisional government was then formed, M. de Lamartine being appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs; and the following is the first manifesto issued: —

"PROCLAMATION OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

"To the French People,—

"A retrograde Government has been overturned by the heroism of the people of Paris.

"This Government has fled, leaving behind it traces of blood, which will for ever forbid its return.

"The blood of the people has flowed, as in July; but, happily, it has not been shed in vain. It has secured a national and popular Government in accordance with the rights, the progress, and the will of this great and generous people.

"A Provisional Government, at the call of the people and some deputies in the sitting of the 24th of February, is for the moment invested with the care of organizing and securing the national victory. It is composed of MM. Dupont de l'Eure, Lamartine, Cremieux, Arago, Ledru Rollin, and Garnier-Pages. The secretaries to this Government are MM. Armand, Marrast, Louis Blanc, and Ferdinand Flocon. These citizens have not hesitated for an instant to accept the patriotic mission which has been imposed upon them by the urgency of the occasion.

"Frenchmen, give to the world the example Paris has given to France. Prepare yourselves, by order and confidence in yourselves, for the institutions which are about to be given you.

"The Provisional Government desires a republic, pending the ratification of the French people, who are to be immediately consulted.

"Neither the people of Paris nor the Provisional Government desire to substitute their opinion for the opinions of the citizens at large upon the definite form of government which the national sovereignty shall proclaim.

"*L'unité de la nation*, formed henceforth of all classes of the people which compose it.

"The government of the nation by itself.

"Liberty, equality, and fraternity for its principles.

"The people to devise and to maintain order.

"Such is the democratic government which France owes to herself, and which our efforts will assure to her.

"Such are the first acts of the Provisional Government.

(Signed) "Dupont (de l'Eure), Lamartine, Ledru-Rollin, Bedeau, Michel-Goudchaux, Arago, Bethmont, Marie, Carnot, Cavagnac, Garnier-Pages."

The Municipal Guard is disbanded.

The protection of the city of Paris is confined to the National Guard, under the orders of M. Courtais.

These are the first acts of the Provisional Government.

M. Dupont (de l'Eure), President of the Council.
M. de Lamartine, Minister of Foreign Affairs.
M. Arago, Minister of Marine.
M. Cremieux, Minister of Justice.
General Bedeau, Minister of War.
M. Marie, Minister of Public Works.
M. Ledru Rollin, Minister of the Interior.
M. Bethmont, Minister of Commerce.
M. Carnot, Minister of Public Instruction.
M. Goudchaux, Minister of Finances.
M. Garnier-Pages, Mayor of Paris.
M. Recurt, Adjoint.
M. Geunard, Adjoint.
General Cavaignac, Governor of Algiers.
General de Courtais, Commandant-General of National Guards.

The other mayors are provisionally retained, as well as the adjoints, under the name of mayors-adjoints of arrondissement.

The Prefecture of Police is under the orders of the Mayor of Paris, and will be reconstituted under another bill.

The Municipal Guard is dissolved. The guard of the city of Paris is entrusted to the National Guard, under the orders of M. Courtais, superior Commandant of the National Guard of Paris.

Other proclamations and manifestoes followed with rapidity. At the sitting of the 24th of the Chamber of Deputies, M. de Lamartine spoke as follows: —

"Gentlemen; I shared in the sentiments of grief which just now agitated this assembly in beholding the most afflicting spectacle that human annals can present — that of a Princess coming forward with her innocent son, after having quitted her deserted palace, to place herself under the protection of the nation. But if I shared in that testimony of respect for a great misfortune, I also share in the solicitude — in the admiration which that people, now fighting during two days against a perfidious Government for the purpose of re-establishing order and liberty, ought to inspire. (Great applause from the tribunes.) Let us not deceive ourselves — let us not imagine that an acclamation in this Chamber can replace the co-operation of 35,000,000 of men. Whatever government be established in the country, it must be cemented by solid definitive guarantees! How will you find the conditions necessary for such a government, in the midst of the floating elements which surround us? By descending into the very depth of the country itself, boldly sounding the great mystery of the right of nations. (Great applause in the tribunes.) In place of having recourse to these subterfuges, to these emotions, in order to maintain one of those fictions which have no stability, I propose to you to form a government, not definite, but provisional — a government charged, first of all, with the task of stanching the blood which flows, of putting a stop to civil war (cheers), — a government which we appoint without putting aside any thing of our resentments and our indignation; and in the next place a government on which we shall impose the duty of convoking and consulting the people in its totality — all that possess in their title of man, the right of a citizen." (Tremendous applause from the people in the tribunes.)

At this moment a violent and imperative knocking was heard at the door of an upper tribune, which was not entirely filled. On the door being opened a number of men rushed in, well provided with arms, and who appeared to have just come from a combat. Several of them forced their way to the front seats, and pointed their muskets at the deputies below. Some of these weapons were also turned in the direction of the Royal party.

Immediately the persons near the Duchess of Orleans, who was present in the Chamber, seemed to address her energetically, and a moment after she rose, and, with her sons and the two Princes, quitted the Chamber by a door on the extreme left.

M. Sauzet at the same moment withdrew from the president's chair, and nearly all the deputies who had remained quitted their places.

The next instant M. Dupont (de l'Eure) took possession of the chair. M. de Lamartine and Ledru-Rollin attempted severally to obtain a hearing, but unsuccessfully. Several of the national guards, and some of the people, also made similar attempts, but without effect. A cry then arose in one of the tribunes of "Let Lamartine speak!" and at once all the others took it up.

M. DE LAMARTINE. — A Provisional Government will be at once proclaimed. (Enthusiastic cries of "Vive Lamartine!")

Other voices. — The names! the names!

M. LEDRU-ROLLIN (in the midst of the noise). — A Provisional Government cannot be organised in a light or careless manner. I shall read over the names aloud, and you will approve, or reject them, as you think fit.

In the midst of shouts and cries the hon. deputy read out the names, but nothing could be heard. Nearly all the deputies had by this time departed, and the national guards and the people had the Chamber to themselves.

M. LEDRU-ROLLIN. — We are obliged to close the sitting in order to proceed to the seat of government.

From all sides — "To the Hôtel-de-Ville! *Vive la Republique!*"

This most extraordinary sitting was then brought to a conclusion at 4 o'clock.

The people withdrew in the utmost tumult.

The *Presse* says: — Five times during the day (25th) M. de Lamartine addressed the people assembled under the windows of the Hôtel-de-Ville: —

"It is thus that you are led from calumny to calumny against the men who have devoted themselves, head, heart, and breast, to give you a real Republic — the Republic of all rights, all interests, and all the legitimate rights of the people. Yesterday you asked us to usurp, in the name of the people of Paris, the rights of 35,000,000 of men, to vote them an absolute Republic, instead of a Republic invested with the strength of their consent; that is to say, to make of that Republic, imposed and not consented, the will of a part of the people, instead of the will of the whole nation. To-day you demand from us the red flag instead of the tricolour one. Citizens! for my part, I will never adopt the red flag; and I will explain in a word why I will oppose it with all the strength of my patriotism. It is, citizens, because the tricolour flag has made the tour of the world, under the Republic and the empire, with our liberties and our glories, and that the red flag has only made the tour of the Champ de Mars, trained through torrents of the blood of the people."

At this part of the speech of M. de Lamartine, after a most fatiguing sitting of sixty hours, in the midst of an irritated crowd, every one was suddenly affected by his words; hands were clapped and tears shed, and they finished by embracing him, shaking his hands, and bearing him in triumph. In a moment after, fresh masses of people arrived, armed with sabres and bayonets. They knocked at the doors; they filled the *salles*. The cry was, that all was lost; that the people were about to fire on or stifle the members of the Provisional Government. M. de Lamartine was called for. He was supplicated to go once more, for the last time, to address the people. He was raised on a step of the staircase; the crowd remained for half an hour without consenting to listen to him, vociferating, brandishing arms of all kinds over his head. M. de Lamartine folded his arms, recommenced his address, and finished by softening and appeasing the people, and determining them either to withdraw, or to become themselves the safeguard of the Provisional Government.

On Saturday, the 26th, the Republic was officially announced by M. de Lamartine, surrounded by the other members of the Provisional Government and the four secretaries. M. de Lamartine descended the steps of the great staircase of the Hôtel-de-Ville, and presenting himself in front of the edifice with a paper in his hand, thus expressed himself: —

"'Citizens —

"'The Provisional Government of the Republic has called upon the people to witness its gratitude for the magnificent national co-operation which has just accepted these new institutions. (Prolonged acclamations from the crowd and National Guard.)

"'The Provisional Government of the Republic has only joyful intelligence to announce to the people here assembled.

"'Royalty is abolished.

"'The Republic is proclaimed.

"'The people will exercise their political rights.

"'National workshops are open for those who are without work. (Immense acclamations.)

"'The army is being reorganised. The National Guard indissolubly unites itself with the people so as to promptly restore order with the same hand that had only the preceding moment conquered our liberty. (Renewed acclamations.)

"'Finally, Gentlemen, the Provisional Government was anxious to be itself the bearer to you of the last decree it has resolved on and signed in this memorable sitting, — that is, the abolition of the penalty of death for political matters. (Unanimous bravos.)

"'This is the noblest decree, Gentlemen, that has ever issued from the mouths of a people the day after their victory. ('Yes, yes!') It is the character of the French nation which escapes in one spontaneous cry from the soul of its Government. ('Yes, yes; bravo.') We have brought it with us, and I will now read it to you. There is not a more becoming homage to a people than the spectacle of its own magnanimity.'"

At the conclusion of this manifestation the Provisional Government, accompanied by the unanimous acclamations of the innumerable population who covered the Place of the Hôtel-de-Ville, was again called upon to receive anew the consecration of the popular voice, given to them by a crowd of citizens, national guards, students, and scholars.

One of the first acts of the Provisional Government was formally to abolish punishment of death for political offences.

Subsequently, and in very few days after, M. de Lamartine issued the following—

"CIRCULAR OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE DIPLOMATIC AGENTS OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

"Sir,—You are aware of the events in Paris, of the victory of the people, their heroism, their moderation, their tranquillity, and re-establishment of order by the concurrence of all the citizens, as if, in this interregnum of visible power, common sense itself governed France.

"The French revolution has thus just arrived at its definite period. France is a Republic, the French Republic does not require to be recognised to exist; it springs from a natural right, it is a national right. It is the will of a great nation which only demands its title from itself. The French Republic, however, desiring to enter into the family of the already instituted governments as a regular power, and not as a phenomenon that disturbs European order, it is requisite that you should promptly inform the government to which you are accredited of the principles and tendencies which will henceforth direct the external policy of the French government.

"The proclamation of the French republic is not an act of aggression against any form of government in the world. Forms of government possess a diversity as legitimate as the diversity of character, of geographical situation, and of intellectual moral and material development amongst the nations: like individuals have their different ages. The principles which govern them have successive phases. Monarchical, Aristocratic, Constitutional, and Republican Governments, are the expression of these different degrees of maturity in the genius of the people.

"They demand more liberty in proportion as they feel themselves more capable of supporting it; they require more equality and democracy in proportion as they are more inspired with justice and love of the people. This is a question of time. A people lose themselves by anticipating this maturity, as they dishonour themselves by allowing it to escape without seizing it. Monarchy and Republicanism are not in the eyes of true statesmen absolute principles which mortally oppose each other; they are facts, which contrast with each other, and which may exist face to face mutually comprehending and respecting each other.

"War, then, is not the principle of the French Revolution, as it became its glorious and fatal necessity in 1792. Between 1792 and 1848, there is half a century. To return, after half a century, to the principle of 1792 or to the principle of conquest of the Empire, would not be to advance, but to retrograde with regard to time. The Revolution of yesterday is a step in advance, not in retreat; we desire that the world and ourselves should march to fraternity and to peace.

"If the situation of the French republic in 1792 explained the necessity of war, the differences which exist between that epoch of our history, and the one in which we now are, explains the necessity of peace. These differences you must apply yourself to comprehend, and to make them understood around you.

"In 1792, the nation was not united. Two people existed upon the same territory. A terrible struggle was still prolonged between the classes dispossessed of their privileges, and those which had conquered equality and liberty. The dispossessed classes united with captive royalty, and with the jealous foreigner to refuse France its revolution, and to substitute in its place monarchy, aristocracy, and theocracy, by invasion. There are now no longer distinct and unequal classes. Liberty has enfranchised all. Equality has levelled every thing in the eyes of the law. Fraternity, the application of which we proclaim, and the benefits of which the National Assembly will soon organize, is about to unite every one. There is not a single citizen in France to whatever opinion he may belong, who does not rally round the principle of the country before every thing, and who does not render her, by this union itself, proof against the attacks and alarms of invasion.

"In 1792, it was not the entire people who had entered into possession of their government: it was the middling class only who desired to exercise liberty and to enjoy it. The triumph of the middle class was then egotistical, as is the triumph of every oligarchy. It desired to retain for itself alone the rights conquered by all. It behoved it, for this purpose, to operate a grand diversion to the accession of the people, by pretcipitating them towards the field of battle, to prevent them from taking possession of their own government. This diversion was war War was the idea of the Monarchists and of the Girondists: it was not that of the more enlightened democrats, who desired, as we do, the sincere, complete, and regular reign of the people themselves, comprehending, under that name, all classes, without exclusion and without preference, of which the nation is composed.

"In 1792, the people were but the instruments of the Revolution, they were not its object. To-day the Revolution has been effected by the people and for them.

"In entering into it, they bring to it their new cares of labour, industry, instruction, agriculture, commerce, morality, contentment, propriety, cheap living, navigation, and lastly of civilization, which are all the necessaries of peace! The people and peace are one and the same word.

"In 1792, the ideas of France and of Europe were not prepared to comprehend, and to accept, the grand harmony of nations between themselves, as a benefit to the human race. The thought of the past age existed only in the heads of a few philosophers. To-day philosophy is popular. Fifty years of liberty to think, to speak, and to write, have produced their result. Books, newspapers, and the senate's meetings have raised European intelligence to its highest pitch. Reason, shining every where, beyond the limits of nations, has created amongst their minds this grand intellectual nationality, which will be the copestone of the French Revolution, and the constitution of international fraternity all over the globe.

"Lastly, in 1792, liberty was a novelty, equality a scandal, and the republic a problem. The rights of the people, scarcely discovered by Fénélon, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, were so forgotten, hidden, and profaned by the old feudal dynasty and sacerdotal traditions, that the most legitimate interference of the people in their affairs appeared a monstrosity to statesmen of the old school. Democracy made thrones and the foundations of societies tremble at the same time. To-day thrones and nations are accustomed to the motto, to the forms, and to the regular agitations of liberty, exercised in diverse proportion almost in all states, even in those which are monarchical. They will habituate themselves to the republic, which is its complete form amongst more matured nations. They will recognise that there is a conservative liberty; they will acknowledge that there can be found in the republic, not only better order, but more true order in this government of all for all than in the government of a few for a few.

"But, exclusive of these disinterested considerations, the interest alone of the consolidations and the duration of the republic would inspire the statesmen of France with thoughts of peace. It is not the country which runs the greatest danger in war, it is liberty. War is almost always a dictatorship;—soldiers forget institutions for men;—thrones tempt the ambitious;—glory dazzles patriotism. The *prestige* of a glorious name veils the design on national sovereignty; the republic doubtless desires glory, but she desires it for herself, and not for Cæsars, or Napoleons.

"Do not, however, deceive yourself: these ideas which the Provisional Government charge you to present to the powers, as a pledge for European security, have not for their object to obtain the pardon of the republic for its audacity in daring to spring to life, still less to sue humbly for the position of a great right and a great people in Europe: they have a far more noble object; to make sovereigns and nations reflect—to prevent them from involuntarily deceiving themselves as to the character of our Revolution, but to bestow true light and a just appearance upon the event; to give, in short, some pledges to humanity, before giving them to our rights and our honour, if they were misunderstood, or threatened.

"The French Republic, then, will not provoke war with any one: it has no need to say that it will accept it, should conditions likely to cause war be imposed upon the French people. The idea of the men who govern France at present is this:—that France will be fortunate, if war should be declared against her, and she be thus constrained to increase in power and glory, in spite of her moderation! A terrible responsibility for France if the republic itself declares war without being provoked to it! In the first case her martial genius, her impatience of action, and her force that has been augmented by so many years of peace, would render her invincible at home, dreaded perhaps beyond her frontiers. In the second case, she would turn against herself the remembrance of her conquests, warp the affection of nationality, and compromise her first and most universal alliance,—the spirit of the people and the genius of civilization.

"After these principles, Monsieur, which are the principles of France, after calm reflection,—principles which she can present without fear and without defiance to her friends and to her enemies,—you will do well to impress on your mind the following declarations:

"The treaties of 1815 no longer exist as a right in the eyes of the French Republic; nevertheless the territorial limits of these treaties are a fact which she admits as a basis, and as a point of departure in her relations with other nations. But if the treaties of 1815 exist no longer, save as facts to be modified by general agreement, and if the republic openly declares that it has the right and mission to attain regularly and pacifically these modifications, the good sense, the moderation, the conscience, and the prudence of the republic exist, and are for Europe a better and more honourable guarantee than the letters of those treaties it so often violated or modified.

"Endeavour, Monsieur, to make this emancipation of the republic from the treaties of 1815 comprehended and admitted in good faith, and to show that this frank declaration possesses nothing inimical to the repose of Europe.

"Thus, we openly declare:—If the hour of the reconstruction of some oppressed nations in Europe, or elsewhere, should appear to us to have sounded in the decrees of

Providence; if Switzerland, our faithful ally since the time of Francis I., were constrained or threatened in the movement of aggrandisement, which she is forming at home, to lend further power to the fasces of democratic governments; if the independant states of Italy were invaded; if limits or obstacles were imposed upon their interior changes, if the right of uniting among themselves to consolidate an Italian country were contested by an armed hand,—the French republic would conceive itself entitled to arm itself to protect these legitimate movements of augmentation, and of nationality amongst the nations. The republic, you see, has passed, at the first step, the era of proscriptions and dictatorships. It is decided never to conceal liberty at home. It is equally decided never to veil its democratic principle abroad. It will allow no one to interfere between the pacific halo of its liberty and the regard of nations. It proclaims itself the intellectual and cordial ally of all the rights, of all the progress, and of all the legitimate developments of the institutions of nations who desire to live under the same principle as its own. It will make no secret propagation or incendiarism amongst its neighbours. It knows that no liberty is durable, save that which is born upon its own grounds. But it will exercise, by the light of its ideas, and by the spectacle of the order and peace which it hopes to display to the world, the sole and honest proselytism—the proselytism of esteem and sympathy.

"We desire, for humanity's sake, that peace should be preserved. We hope it also. One only question of war had been agitated, a year ago, between France and England. It was not republican France which established this warlike question, it was the dynasty. That dynasty bears with it that danger of war to which it had given birth in Europe, by the wholly personal ambition of its family alliances in Spain. Thus this domestic policy of the fallen dynasty, which weighed for seventeen years upon our national dignity, weighed down, at the same time, by its pretensions to another crown at Madrid, our liberal alliances and peace. The republic has no ambition. The republic has no nepotism. It does not inherit the pretensions of a family. Let Spain govern itself; let Spain be independent and free. France, for the solidity of this natural alliance, relies more upon the conformity of principles than upon the successions of the house of Bourbon!

"Such is, Monsieur, the spirit of the council of the republic. Such will invariably be the character of the frank, firm, and moderate policy which you will have to represent. The republic pronounced at its birth, and in the midst of the heat of a contest not provoked by the people, three words, which have invested its soul, and which will call down upon its cradle the benedictions of God and of man—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. She gave on the following day, by the abolition of pain of death in political matters, the true commentary of these three words at home; give them also their true commentary abroad. The sense of these three words, applied to our exterior relations, is this; enfranchisement of France from the chains which confined her principles and dignity; recovery of the rank which she ought to occupy in the scale of the great European powers; and, lastly, the declaration of alliance and friendship with all nations. If France has the consciousness of her part in the liberal and civilizing mission of the age, there is not one of these words which signifies *war*. If Europe be prudent and just, there is not one word which does not betoken *peace*.

"Receive, Sir, the assurance of my most distinguished consideration.

(Signed) "LAMARTINE,
"Member of the Provisional Government of the Republic
and Minister of Foreign Affairs."

In person, M. Alphonse de Lamartine is about five feet ten inches in height, with sharp features, oval countenance, high and expansive forehead, thick head of hair, now turning grey, prominent brow, dark and somewhat deep-set eyes, noble look, long nose, thin and rather arched, a wide mouth and thin lips, deeply marked at the sides, a long, but well-defined chin, and dark complexion: altogether, the physiognomy is striking and prepossessing.

To foresee the progress and result of Lamartine's career is impossible to human eye; but assuredly the singular prediction of Lady Esther Stanhope has been, in a great measure, accomplished. His courage, reputation, eloquence, and aptitude for affairs have certainly saved his country from the immediate horrors of anarchy and bloodshed; and on him, at this moment, is fixed every eye in Europe, and all the best hopes of the regeneration of his native land.

*March 13th*, 1848. H. T. R.

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# HISTORY

OF

# THE GIRONDISTS.

## BOOK XLI.

I. The night was full of agitation, panic, and meetings.

Whilst the Girondists, united at the house of Valazé, concerted amongst themselves the means of regaining a victory which the Montagnards owed only to a surprise, Marat, Hébert, Dobsent, Varlet, Vincent, the American Fournier, the Spaniard Gusman, who was to Marat what Saint Just was to Robespierre, Henriot, and some sixty of the most violent members of the sections, re-assembled at l'Archevêché, in a hall, whence the public were excluded. A thousand plans were debated.

Varlet, a young man, more depraved than enlightened by his education, and as yet obscure, unfolded a comprehensive plan of individual murders, evidently inspired by the remembrances of September. Varlet had fabricated false correspondences of the Girondists with the prince of Coburg, designed to cast infamy, and excite the execration of the people, upon these pretended traitors of the country. During the night they were to be arrested one by one in their dwellings, and conducted, without form, to an isolated house in the faubourg St. Jacques, where they were to be subjected to a private trial. Ditches, cut beforehand in a garden attached to this house, could cover the remains of the victims, and conceal from the public the mode of their disappearance. On the morrow, the publication of the fabricated correspondence would devote their names to public execration. They might spread abroad the report of their flight to foreign lands, and when the tardy truth should refute all these suppositions, the republic would be saved, the Commune regenerated, and the people would thank their avengers. Such was Varlet's plan. It was agreeable to the executioners of September, but was rejected by Dobsent and Marat himself. First, as tainted by a fraud unworthy of the people, and secondly, as reducing the victims to a number too limited.

It was resolved to work out the purification by the people themselves, and to point out to them as many victims as were requisite for their vengeance. Some carried the number of proscribed heads to thirty, others to eighty. This was left to chance. The conspirators separated to go and convey the password in the sections and faubourgs.

This signal came from Marat's mouth, and was "No half measures." It is written, that on this same night another superior executive assembly, composed of Robespierre, Danton, Fabre, Pache, and some other principal members of the Commune and the Convention, were assembled at Charenton, in a house where the plots of the 20th of June and the 10th of August had been laid, and that there the great leaders of La Montagne had reciprocally delivered up their enemies, like Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus. This has never been proved.

II. Danton, drawn in spite of himself into this struggle, would have wished the victory to have been confined to the humiliation of the Girondists. He was far from conspiring the death of rivals whom he admired the most, and feared the least, in the Convention. He had the advantage of popularity over them. This sufficed him: his heart leaned to their side. "No," said he, on the evening, in speaking of them, "these admirable speakers do not deserve such anger; they are enthusiasts, and trifling as the woman who inspires them. Why do they not take a man for their leader? This woman will destroy them. She is the Circe of the republic." Danton alluded to Madame Roland, who had humbled his pride. Robespierre, disquieted and troubled for the consequences of this schism in the Convention, shut himself up on the evening of this crisis in complete seclusion, like a man who dreaded to touch an event, for fear of causing it to deviate or miscarry. He only threw into the balance some words indispensable to his situation, and necessary to his popularity.

Marat alone inflamed the anger of the people, and met his personal enemies, the Girondists, body to body, until they should be levelled.

III. The Girondists, united at Valazé's, were informed by an accident of the resolutions of the meeting. A federal Breton, of their party, arrived but a few days in Paris, passed the night of the 27th before l'Archevêché. Some groups of people pressed to the door. They were admitted by showing a copper medal to the keeper. The Breton, impelled by curiosity, drew from his pocket a piece of copper money, which the guardian took for the sign of recognition, and was admitted. The deliberation had hardly commenced, when the imprudent man saw his error, and trembled lest he should be discovered. The confusion of the moment, and the agitation of people's minds, saved him. He departed without having been suspected, and ran to warn a deputy of his department. This deputy conducted him to Valazé's. Valazé and his friends conjured this man to return on the following night to the focus of the conspiracy, and report to them what he should see and hear. The Breton again devoted himself. His countenance, already known, removed all distrust from the conspirators. He returned to instruct Valazé, but he had been followed. The next day his body was found, pierced with wounds, floating on the Seine, still bearing the copper medal by aid of which he had surprised the conspirators.

IV. In spite of the decree of the evening which suppressed it, the Commission of Twelve had still sat during the night. It had deliberated upon the measures of resistance which the Girondists proposed to take in the Convention on the morrow. Every member of this party, and of La Plaine, met early in the morning at the Assembly. Isnard resumed the president's chair, resolved to regain his ascendency over the majority, or to die at his post. Lanjuinais boldly demanded permission to speak.

Lanjuinais was not a Girondist. He possessed neither the ambition nor the wrongs of that party; he had neither mingled with the plots of the 20th of June, nor in those of the 10th of August, nor in the condemnation of Louis XVI. Born at Rennes, of an honourable family, himself a distinguished advocate and a Christian philosopher, his revolutionary ideas were but a form of his evangelical faith. Equality was one of his dogmas. "Nobility," wrote he in one of his early productions, "is not a necessary evil." He had exerted himself in the parliamentary debates during the conflict of the third estate of Brittany against the aristocracy, the clergy, and the parliament of Rennes. This same spirit of opposition had caused him to be named deputy to the States-general. He had there been one of the founders of the "*Club Breton.*" Lanjuinais was one of those men whose purity of soul stood alone in the midst of party, and whose generosity of heart devoted him to falling causes, when he thought he discerned therein justice and truth. He possessed, further, that courage which rose before the tumult of the assemblies, and the sedition of the people, as that of the soldier under fire. The oppression of the Girondists, on the evening before, by La Montagne and the people, had exasperated him. It was enough that a party was oppressed to enlist Lanjuinais in their ranks. At his appearance La Montagne expected a protest, and refused to hear him. "I have a right to be heard," said Lanjuinais, "upon the pretended decree of yesterday. I maintain that there has been no decree, and if there have been, it should be revoked." Murmurs from La Montagne interrupted him. "All is lost, citizens," resumed Lanjuinais, with the gesture of a man who contemplates the ruin of his country, — "all is lost! and I denounce to you, in the decree of yesterday, a conspiracy a thousand times more atrocious than those which have been plotted as yet. Why! for three months past your Commissioners have committed more arbitrary arrests in the departments than in thirty years of despotism! Men have preached these last six months murder and anarchy, and they remain unpunished!" "If Lanjuinais is not silent," cried Legendre, "I declare that I will ascend and precipitate him from the tribune!" "Do you take me, then, for an ox?" replied Lanjuinais, alluding to Legendre's trade of a butcher. "And I," said Barbaroux, — "I demand that the speech of Legendre be consigned to the *procès verbal*, to attest the liberty which we enjoy." "You have protected the aristocrats of your department; you are a villain!" vociferated the members of La Montagne against Lanjuinais. Robespierre, affecting a languishing voice and exhausted strength, pronounced some bitter and lachrymose phrases upon the tyranny of the Twelve. The noise of La Plaine drowned the words of the orator. The revocation of the decree of the evening before, which abolished the Commission of the Twelve, was put to the vote. A feeble majority annulled this decree. Astonishment petrified La Montagne. "We must veil the statue of Liberty," cried Collot d'Herbois. Danton, who still sought to elude the definitive rupture of the representation, rose and adroitly presented a last means of conciliation to the Girondist conquerors. "Your decree of yesterday," said he to the Convention, "was a great act of justice; I am glad to think it will be renewed before the end of this session; but should the Commission of Twelve resume the power which it desired to exercise even over the members of the Assembly, — if the thread of the conspiracy should not be broken, — if the magistrates of the people be not restored to their functions, after having proved that we surpass our enemies in prudence, we will prove to them that we surpass them also in boldness and revolutionary vigour." All the members of La Montagne joined, by gesture and acclamation, in the declaration of Danton. "And we," replied the Girondists, — "we demand vengeance from the departments, and not from the people in the tribunes." The Montagnards demanded, conformably with the insinuations of Danton, the liberty of Hébert. The Plain, on the proposition of Boyer-Fonfrède, hastened to vote it. Petitioners assembled, and, prompted by the Girondists, demanded to be heard. Interrupted by the noise of La Montagne and the tribunes, the petitioners received the felicitations of Isnard and the honours of the Assembly.

"Will you order," said Danton, "the impression of such an address? The French people are ready to turn their arms against their enemies. They will make, when they desire it, those men who are stupid enough to believe there is a distinction between the people and the citizens, see their nothingness in a single day. Consider, that, if they boast of a majority against you here, you have an immense majority for you in the republic and in Paris." "Yes, yes," answered the tribunes. "It is time," resumed Danton, "that the people no longer confine themselves to defensive warfare! that they attack the abettors of *modérantisme*. It is time that we march boldly on our career! It is time that we confirm the destiny of France! It is time that we coalesce against the plots of all those who would destroy the republic! We have shown energy one day, and we have conquered. No! Paris shall not perish."

This eloquent diversion of Danton, covered with unanimous applause, terminated the meeting, and left the day undecided. "What signify your quarrels to me?" said Danton, on leaving the Tuileries, to the groups which surrounded him, "I only see our enemies. Let us march together against the enemies of our country."

V. In the evening, Hébert was brought back in triumph to the Hôtel-de-Ville. He received there a crown of laurel from the hands of Chaumette.

It was demanded that, in expiation of the captivity of Hébert, the Commission of Twelve should be delivered over to the revolutionary tribunal. Hébert, detaching the crown from his forehead, placed it on the bust of Jean Jacques Rousseau—the first apostle of liberty.

The sitting of the club of the Jacobins on the 30th preluded the storm of the morrow. Whilst the insurrectional committee of the Archbishopric concerted the movement, Legendre and Robespierre at the Jacobins, and Marat and Danton at the Cordeliers, nourished the flame of opinion. "I feel myself incapable," said Robespierre, "of prescribing to the people the means of saving themselves. This power is not bestowed upon a single individual! This is not granted to me, who am exhausted by four years of revolution, and by the heart-rending spectacle of the triumph of tyranny! It is not for me to indicate these measures,—for me who am consumed by a slow fever, and above all by the fever of patriotism."

This apparent resignation of powerless patriotism was the most subtle incitement to the despairing energy of the people. "No, no," answered one of the most enthusiastic Jacobins; "never will posterity believe that twenty-five millions of men would allow themselves to be subjected by a handful of intriguers, or she will see in us only twenty-five millions of cowards! I say that to-morrow the trumpet must be sounded, the cannons roar, and let those who will not rise against the common enemy be declared traitors to the country! When the tocsin shall thunder, this harmony will encourage the cowardly; they will rise with us, and we shall exterminate our enemies."

VI. The insurrectional measures of the central committee of the Archbishopric transpired throughout Paris. The council of the Commune, re-assembled in permanent session at the Hôtel-de-Ville, began to speak magisterially, and to threaten the Convention. The sections, tumultuously assembled, were engaged in contradictory deliberations, according as the absence or presence of the sectionaries took away from, or conceded the majority, to one or other of the two parties. The disastrous news which arrived daily from La Vendée, from the frontiers and from the south, threw terror into the minds of the people, and disposed them to desperate measures. The disasters of the army of the Pyrenees; the retreat, more similar to a defeat, of the army of the north; Valenciennes and Cambray blockaded, without the power of receiving succour, and counting day by day the duration of a resistance which was believed impossible; the republican troops defeated at Fontenay by the royalist peasants of Lescure; Marseilles on fire, Bordeaux in agitation, and Lyons letting the first sparks of the insurrection which lurked within its walls escape; all these calamities bursting at once upon the republic, rent at the same time the Convention to the core, and exasperated the public spirit against the men, who, whether weak or perfidious, governed the country so disastrously.

The people, not knowing whom to lay hold of, imputed all the calamities of the moment to the Girondists.

To resist this torrent of unpopularity directed against them, the Girondists had but the abstract power of the law. The bayonets and pikes of the national guard wavered at the will of the versatility of the sections. On the one side, some intrepid orators, making appeals to departments too distant to hear them,—on the other, a whole people armed, incited by hidden agitators, and directed by the organised Jacobins: the triumph could not be doubtful. The Girondists, reassured at first by the legality of their cause, and the favour with which the citizens of Paris surrounded them, began at last to foresee their ruin, and prepared their minds for it, less as politicians than as martyrs. Still they loved to flatter themselves that fortune would yet return to them at the last moment. They urged address upon address from their departments, in order to place their heads under the protection of Paris. They thought that, if the *modérés* of the Convention were too timid to attack with them the power of the Commune, and to crush anarchy, these same men had too much regard for their own safety to abandon themselves by delivering the heads of twenty-two of their colleagues to ostracism, or to the scaffold of Marat. They refused to believe that the honest armed men of the sections would ever employ against the national representation those bayonets which they carried to defend it. They carried these wavering thoughts, sometimes confident, sometimes discouraging, into the different nocturnal meetings which they attended after the assemblies of the night. Buzot, Louvet, Barbaroux, Pétion, Isnard, Rebecqui, already concealing themselves from the observation of the people, ascended, one by one, the staircase of Roland, hidden in the depth of a court of the Rue de la Harpe. There, these intrepid young men accused the sloth and hesitation of the Commission of Twelve, who, they asserted should have prevented the blow of the Commune, and forced and pledged the Convention from the first evening to deliver up Marat, Pache, Danton, and Robespierre to a revolutionary tribunal,—to call the forces of the departments to Paris,—to reorganise the sections, and close the clubs, whence issued anarchy, crime, and fear.

Roland, humbled by his fall, and coveting the glory of strengthening the wavering republic, displayed that sombre energy of words which costs nothing to weaponless hands. Madame Roland, divided between the impassioned interest which her heart experienced for her friends, and the masculine stamp of her character, by turns animated and bewailed these discourses. Buzot adored in her the image and the voice of the country. Barbaroux heard her with the respect and enthusiasm of his age. They were prepared to die, but they wished to die fighting.

VII. Vergniaud, Condorcet, Siéyès, Fonfrède, Ducos, Guadet, and Gensonné met more frequently together in the Rue Saint Lazare or at Clichy, sometimes at a female's attached to one of them, sometimes at the younger Fonfrède's. These were the political men of the party. Siéyès counselled vigorous acts, the responsibility of which he did not desire solely to take upon himself. A man of energy, but not of execution, Condorcet was indignant at the abortion of his ideal theories, and devoted himself to death, rather than abandon his ideas but with his blood. Fonfrède and Ducos, Montagnards in thought, were retained to their party by hatred to Robespierre. They were still more retained by those bonds of friendship which are stronger than the bonds of opinion amongst men of heart who have sworn fidelity to each other. Ducos and Fonfrède inclined to disclaim the Commission of Twelve, whose imprudent provocations they blamed.

Guadet, burning with ardour, eloquence, and intrepidity, drawn away by the torrent of his own enthusiasm, believing in its power upon the Convention, desired no other plan than that conceived at the moment, no other tactics than improvisation, and no other arms than his eloquence; equally ready to conquer or die, provided that such a result occurred in a fit of enthusiasm in the tribune.

Gensonné, more reflective and better exercised in the means of government, wished for protection and triumph from the bayonets of the sections, which he no longer found in the oscillations of a wavering majority.

Vergniaud, the strength, the glory, and the last popular stay of his party, was strongly urged by all to take the supreme direction of this struggle; to prepare their thoughts, their sentiments, their speeches, as alone equal to the magnitude of the danger; to mount the tribune; to allow his indignant spirit to blaze forth before his country; to crush conspiracy by law, and to restore that courage to good citizens which his silence had gradually extinguished in every heart.

Vergniaud listened unresolved to the demands of his friends. Too clear-sighted to dissemble to himself the extremity of the danger, too courageous to fear death, he was also too politic, and too well versed in history, to delude himself with the different plans they proposed to him, Vergniaud felt a repugnance to assume the responsibility of the defeat and ruin of his party, which appeared to him already consummated.

Vergniaud, no longer impelled by illusion or ardour, still preserved that stoical calmness which surpasses both, which sees the critical moment approach without blenching, and which, struggling without hope, accepts defeat as men accept martyrdom, with all the indifference and heroism of free will.

VIII. The wanderings of his party had seldom drawn Vergniaud aside. With his eyes fixed upon Europe, the great orator felt, as profoundly as Danton, the necessity of fortifying the unity of the republic, in order to resist the dismemberment of the country. The desperate federalism of Barbaroux, Louvet, and Madame Roland excited his pity. He had never adopted federalism in his speeches but as a desperate argument, calculated to make anarchy itself tremble.

He felt that the most implacable enemies of France could not accomplish any step against her more fatal than that of the voluntary dismemberment, dreamed of by some madmen. What he dreaded for his country, from the struggle in which he was engaged with the Commune, was not so much the proscription and death of his friends, and his own proscription and death, as the insurrection and dislocation of the departments which must ensue from this destruction of the representation. In Vergniaud's soul patriotism entirely stifled party spirit. His speeches would not have been so ardent, but for the fire of this patriotism.

In this perplexity of mind, Vergniaud, like all men placed in the face of impossibility, asked nothing from destiny, from his friends, or his enemies, but time. He had sacrificed to time in accepting the republic on the day following the 10th of August, when he still believed, on the evening before, in the transitory necessity of a constitutional monarchy. He had sacrificed to time when he had, against his conscience, voted the death of Louis XVI. These two concessions had adjourned the danger, but as the dyke repels the waves, by accumulating and aggrandising their weight. Vergniaud desired still to adjourn, and, by yielding the government to La Montagne, to oppose the anarchy of the people, and prevent the rupture between Paris and the departments. Without ambition for himself, without even vanity for his name, it cost him nothing to cede power to his rivals. Vergniaud inclined then to measures of accommodation. Danton, who had the same views, entertained in good faith these conciliatory dispositions of Vergniaud, conveyed through mutual friends.

IX. Robespierre and Pache, certain henceforth to conquer, applied themselves, for some days beforehand, to reduce the insurrection to the character of an irresistible demonstration of the will of the people. They desired to weigh upon the Convention, not to break it. No blood, no victims; such was the new word of command which Pache and his accomplices circulated.

To suppress the Commission of Twelve, to expel twenty-two members from the Convention, to give the majority to La Montagne, to deliver the revolutionary government to the Commune of Paris, to establish a legal terror under the name of an intimidated and subjected national representation,—to these were confined the results of the day as prepared by the conspirators.

Robespierre, Danton, Pache, and Marat himself, agreed at length in this prudent idea. Henriot received an injunction so to discipline the insurrection, and to blend in its proceedings the orders of the Convention and those of the Commune in such manner that the revolt should possess the character of legality, and that the troops directed on the Tuileries should not know whether they went to deliver or constrain the representation. This hypocritical and equivocal character of the days of the 31st of May and the 2nd of June was entirely due to the astute genius of Pache. He inspired the Commune with his policy, and sustained, better than Pétion had done on the 10th of August, the double part of provoker and moderator of the movement.

X. These arrangements, known to the Girondists, left them to believe that the sitting of the 31st would limit itself to a violent struggle for the majority; a struggle in which the people would take no further part than by their curiosity and shouts in favour of La Montagne, but which the least concession on their part would appease as in former days. The reports which were made to them were various, according to the quarters and the clubs whence the information was conveyed.

The meeting of the 30th, short, and without discussion, was only marked by a deputation of twenty-seven sections of Paris, demanding the abrogation of the Commission of

Twelve, and the arrest of its members. The Convention, few in number — the benches in the centre being empty — voted that this petition be printed. This resignation accustomed the Commune hourly to greater audacity and the national representation to further patience.

In the evening the general council of the Commune assembled, and became the active focus of insurrection. Paris was from that moment divided into two camps: the one which embraced in its bosom the Tuileries, the Carrousel, the Palais Royal, and all the opulent or commercialists of the city, whose battalions were composed of citizens, friends to order, still held for the Girondists; the other extending from the Hôtel-de-Ville to the extremity of the two large faubourgs, St. Marceau and St. Antoine, and devoted to the Jacobins.

XI. Pache, Chaumette, Hébert, Sergent, and Panis affected to preserve during this night, in their speeches and their acts in the council of the Commune, the appearance of legality. Hardly had Pache finished speaking, when the sound of the tocsin was heard in the towers of the cathedral.

It was three o'clock in the morning. Those dismal sounds, soon spreading from belfry to belfry, awoke in surprise the citizens of Paris, and producing excitement in the souls of some, terror in the minds of others. The tocsin from the 14th of July had been the *pas de charge* of the great seditions of the people.

In the midst of the tumult which this noise excited at the Hôtel-de-Ville and on the Place de Grève, a young man named Dobsent, an orator of the committee of the Archbishopric, entered the council-hall of the Commune, at the head of a deputation of a majority of the sections. Dobsent declared, in the name of the sovereign people represented by the sections, that the people, injured in their rights, came to take extreme measures, in order to save themselves, and that the municipality and all the authorities of the departments were dissolved. At these words Chaumette summoned his colleagues in the Commune to abdicate their power into the hands of the people. All the members of the council arose, resigned their mandate, and swore not to separate themselves from the nation. They retired amidst cries of "Vive la republique!"

Dobsent created, on the instant, a new council, the majority consisting of the ancient members. This council included Pache, Chaumette, Hébert, and those reinstated in their functions in the name of the insurrection. The council, in the mean while, changed its title for one more significant, and declared itself the revolutionary council-general of the Commune of Paris.

It ordered Henriot to have the alarm gun fired, to sound the tocsin at the Hôtel-de-Ville, to send reinforcements to the posts of the prisons, to prevent the escape or the massacre of the captives.

The *gens d'armes* and the national guards again defiled, and took their oath to the insurrectional power. Every quarter of an hour new deputations and battalions from the sections came to adhere to the motion, and fraternise with the insurrection. Day appeared; the whole city was on foot; the mayor Pache, the dictator of a night, arrived at the Convention, to render to it an account of the situation of Paris. Members of the council accompanied him to place themselves, if there were need, between the poignard and the mayor. An immense column of people followed Pache to the Carrousel, and formed a popular guard for him. Henriot, on horseback, ran through the sections, made the battalions march, and mustered the troops round the Tuileries, upon the Pont Neuf, and on the Carrousel. Henriot associated, as Pache, the public force to the insurrection which they seemed destined at once to aggrandise and to restrain.

XII. Such was the aspect of Paris at day-break on the 31st of May. The sky was overcast, the freezing wind irritated the fibres of the men, and predisposed them to anger. The national guards shivered under their arms. The want of sleep, the cold, the sound of the tocsin, the roaring of the alarm gun, the impatience of the event, — doubt, astonishment, and uncertainty — gave to the physiognomy of the people and the soldiers a dull and sinister expression, which the countenances of the crowd contract, like to that of a criminal, on the eve or the morrow of great attempts.

XIII. The menaced deputies, dreading the results of this night, had not slept in their dwellings. Vergniaud alone had obstinately refused to take any measure of safety. "What signifies my life to me?" he had replied, on leaving

Valazé's the evening before: "my blood will be perhaps more eloquent than my words in awakening and saving my country. Let them shed it, if it must fall again upon them!" At three in the morning the alarm gun and the sound of the tocsin awoke them. "Illa suprema dies!" cried Rabaut St. Etienne, on hearing these noises. A pious man, Rabaut knelt down at the foot of the bed on which he had just slept free for the last time, and invoked aloud the Divine mercy upon his companions, upon his country, and upon himself.

The sceptical Louvet and young Barbaroux related afterwards that this prayer of Rabaut, formerly a minister of the Gospel, had profoundly affected their hearts. There are moments when the thought of God forces itself into men's souls, and strongly imbues them with the sense of their own feebleness; but it never weakens them. Rabaut arose tranquil and fortified. His friends and himself descended at six o'clock into the street, with pistols and daggers concealed under their clothes. They reached, without having been recognised, their posts in the Convention.

The hall was, as yet, empty. Danton, alone, agitated by the events of the night, and impatient of those of the day, walked about with visible anxiety. He talked with two members of La Montagne. At the sight of the Girondists, whom he looked upon with regret as victims, Danton made a gesture of sorrow, and a convulsive motion of pity contracted his mouth. Louvet thought he perceived a smile of joy. "Do you see," said he to Guadet, "what horrible hope shines upon that hideous face?" "Doubtless," said Guadet, loud enough to be heard by Danton, "it is to-day that Clodius exiles Cicero."

XIV. While the hall was filling, and the groups of deputies inquired of each other the events of the night, the armed section of La Butte des Moulins, supported by five surrounding sections from the centre of Paris, learning that the faubourg St. Antoine was marching to disarm it, intrenched themselves in the garden of the Palais Royal, and levelled their cannon, charged them with grape, and presented a last point of defence to the majority of the Convention against the oppression of the Commune. The forty thousand federalists, arrived at the gratings of the Palais Royal, tried to force the gates of that garden. The sections of the centre disposed themselves to defend them. Blood was about to flow. They came to a parley, and the federalists contented themselves with demanding an entrance into the garden for the deputations of their battalions, in order to assure themselves if it were true that the sectionaries of the Palais Royal had set up the white cockade. The deputations being introduced, recognised the absurdity of this calumny, and shook hands with their brethren in arms. This episode appeased the anger of the people, and restrained the battalions of the two parties.

The sitting of the Convention opened at six o'clock. The minister of the interior, Garat, and, after him, Pache, rendered an account of the agitation of Paris, which they attributed to the restoration of the Commission of Twelve. Valazé, impatient to decide the day, ascended one of the first to the tribune. Vergniaud, who dreaded the temerity of his friends, made a sign of displeasure. "Since the breaking up of the meeting of yesterday," said Valazé, "the tocsin sounds, the *générale* has beaten, by order of whom? Dare you look at the guilty? Henriot, provisional commandant, has sent to the post of the Pont Neuf the order to fire the alarm gun. It is a manifest prevarication punishable by the pain of death." (The tribunes rose at these words.) "If the tumult continues," resumed Valazé, with intrepidity, "I declare that I will make my character respected. I am here the representative of twenty-five millions of men. I demand that Henriot be called to the bar, and put under arrest. I demand that the Commission of Twelve, so much calumniated, be called upon to communicate the reports which they have received."

Thuriot succeeded to Valazé. He demanded that the Commission should be again immediately dissolved; that seals should be placed upon their papers, and the examination of their acts deferred to the Committee of Public Safety. These words of Thuriot were broken off, and at last interrupted by the sound of the tocsin. Confused cries arose, some for the motion of Valazé, others for that of Thuriot. The alarm gun drowned all. Vergniaud, in the tribune, made a gesture of pacification, and at length obtained silence.

"I am so persuaded of the truths you have been told regarding the fatal consequences of the combat which appears to be preparing in Paris—I am so convinced that this combat will eminently compromise liberty and the republic—that, in my consideration, he who desires to see himself engaged in it is an accomplice of our exterior enemies, whatever be the success of it. And the commission is pointed out to you as the scourge of France at the moment even when you hear the cannon of alarm! They demand that it should be dissolved if it has committed any arbitrary acts. Without doubt, if it has done this, it ought to be dissolved. But it must be heard. However, this is not the moment, in my opinion, to hear its report. This report will necessarily clash against the passions, which should be avoided in the day of agitation. What is requisite is, that the Convention should prove to France that she is free. Well, then, to prove so, it is not necessary to dissolve the commission to-day. I demand, then, an adjournment until to-morrow. In the mean time, let us know who has ordered the alarm gun to be fired, and let us order the commandant-general to appear at the bar."

Unanimous cries of applause arose to sanction this adjournment of Vergniaud. He neither saved liberty nor honour, but he saved the attitude of the Convention. He appeased the people by promising them the victory. He satisfied La Montagne in taking from them the odium of violence. He preserved the heads of the Girondists by promising their abdication. It was a vain protestation of respect to the law. It belonged to all, and, above all, to the weak. The Girondists felt themselves at once lost and saved in the concession of their orator. Those who thought of their own lives applauded him; those who thought of their honour remained in mute consternation.

XV. Danton desired to wrest for the Assembly a victory already half ceded by Vergniaud. "Justice before all the Commission," said he, in his most powerful voice. "It has merited popular indignation; remember my discourse to you against it. A man whom nature has created with a benign disposition, without passions,—the minister of the interior,—has himself engaged to release his victims to you. You created this commission, not for itself but for yourself. Examine its acts. If it is guilty, make a terrible example of it, which will terrify all those who do not respect the people, even in their revolutionary exaggeration. The cannon have thundered. But if Paris has only desired to give a grand signal to excite the representations which are laid to you, — if Paris, by a too solemn convocation, has only wished to warn all the citizens to come and demand justice of you, Paris has still merited well of the country! Far from blaming this explosion, turn it to the profit of the public weal, by dissolving your commission."

Some murmured, others applauded. Danton threw a glance of disdain upon La Plaine, which was in agitation at his feet. "I only address myself," said he, making a sign to Vergniaud, — "I only address myself to those who have some political talent, and not to those absurd persons who know not how to speak, but by their passions." The motion of his head, and the glance of his eye, conveyed this insolent apostrophe to Guadet, Buzot, and Louvet. "I say to the first," continued Danton, "consider the grandeur of your aim; it is to save the people from their enemies, from the aristocrats, from their own anger. The commission has been sufficiently devoid of sense to issue rash arrests and notify them to the mayor of Paris. I demand the judgment of its members. You believe them irreproachable, you say? For myself, I believe that they have only listened to their own resentments. This chaos must be reduced to order, — justice must be done to the people!" "What people?" cried out La Plaine to him. "This people is immense." He showed with his hand the innumerable heads which leaned from the height of the public tribunes. "This people is the advanced guard of the republic. All the departments execrate tyranny. All avow this grand movement which shall exterminate tyranny. I will be the first to render ample justice to those courageous men who have caused the air to resound with the tocsin, and the cannon of alarm." The bravos of the tribunes did not allow him to finish this justification of Henriot, and of the revolutionary committee of the Commune. Danton, led away himself far from the moderation which he meditated in commencing his speech, felt that he was intoxicating himself with the delirium of his auditory, and that he irritated the rage he desired to allay. He resumed thus: "If some men," said he, "of whatever party they may be, would wish to prolong a movement, rendered useless when you shall have had justice, Paris herself will annihilate them!" He concluded by demanding that the Assembly should be consulted upon the suppression of the Commission of Twelve.

Vergniaud, apostrophised by the tribunes, demanded that they should be evacuated. "You accuse us," cried Rabaud to Bourdon de l'Oise, "because you know that we ought to accuse you!" The deputation of the Section of l'Observatoire was admitted. They desired, they said, in the name of the General Council, to communicate the measures they had taken. They had placed property under the care of the *sans culottes*, and as that class could not exist without labour, they had allotted them a sum of forty sous per diem. "The people who rose a first time," said the orator, "to hurl the tyrant from his throne, arise again to arrest the liberty-destroying plots of the contra-revolutionists!" "Denounce these plots," cried the Girondists to him. Guadet, irritated by so much audacity, rushed to the tribune. "The petitioners," said he, "speak of great conspiracies; they only deceive themselves in one word, that is, that in lieu of saying they have discovered them, they ought to say they have executed them." The tribunes, at these words, seemed ready to rush upon Guadet. "Let this Dumouriez speak," said Bourdon de l'Oise. "Do you think," pursued Guadet, "that the laws belong to the sections of Paris or to the entire republic? To establish an authority above the laws is to violate the republic. And are not those above the law who cause the tocsin to sound, the gates of the city to be shut, and the alarm gun to thunder? They are not the sections of Paris; they are a few villains." "You desire to destroy Paris; you calumniate it," cried out La Montagne to him. "I am the friend of Paris; the enemy of Paris is yourself," replied the orator. He would have continued, but shouts and invectives cut short his speech.

XVI. The president threatened to make the tribunes evacuate the hall. "A rival authority raises itself by your side," resumed Guadet, "if you permit this revolutionary committee to subsist." His voice again expired in the tumult. They hardly heard his proposition to annul all the measures taken by the municipality, and to charge the Commission of Twelve to discover and to punish those who had caused the barriers to be shut, the tocsin to be sounded, and the cannon fired. Vergniaud succeeded Guadet, seeking to allay the irritation produced by the speech of his friend. "Are the Girondists alone permitted to speak?" cried out Legendre to him. "Let Couthon speak." Robespierre spoke in a low tone to his confidant, and followed him with his eye to the tribune. "Without doubt there is a movement in Paris," said Couthon. "The Commune has caused the tocsin to sound, but we are in a moment of crisis now, when it can take under its responsibility those measures rendered necessary by circumstances." Guadet accused him of having prepared the insurrection. "Where is the insurrection? It is an insult to the people of Paris to say there is an insurrection. If there has been commotion, it is your commission which has caused it. It is a criminal faction, which, to cover a great conspiracy, desires a great disturbance. It is this faction which desires, by spreading its calumny, to kindle civil war, and to afford our enemies the means of entering France, and there proclaiming a tyrant. Recall to yourselves, citizens, that the court, seeking always new means of suppressing liberty, contrived to establish a central committee. Thus the faction of the 'Hommes d'Etat,' has caused a commission to be created. The commission of the court caused Hébert to be arrested, the Commission of Twelve arrested him also; the commission of the court issued a mandate of arrest against three deputies; when it saw that opinion abandoned it, it ran the risk of an appeal to armed force. Is this not precisely what the Commission of Twelve has done?" This cunning parallel of Couthon's, between the acts of the two *tyrannies*, excited the groans of the tribunes, whom such an assimilation reminded of the 10th of August. The orator, interrupted by the clapping of hands, appeared to rejoice in the bad feeling he had excited, and was only prevented from resuming his discourse by his breath literally failing him. Vergniaud felt the blow; his heart denied utterance. He turned towards the usher, who supplied the orators with a glass of water: "Give," said he, "a glass of blood to Couthon; he is thirsting for it." Afterwards resuming his sang froid, and feeling that some sacrifice was required by circumstances to disarm the people, he ascended the tribune. "And I also," said he, — "I demand that you decree that the sections of Paris have deserved well of the country in maintaining tranquillity on this critical day, and that you should invite them to continue the same surveillance until every conspiracy is developed." This proposition, admitting two senses, was decreed through weariness by the two parties, each of the two thinking it voted against the other.

But fresh petitioners came unexpectedly, who demanded more imperiously that the deputies—*traitors to the country*—should be delivered up to the blade of justice: they demanded a revolutionary army of Paris, levied and paid at the rate of forty sous per diem; the arrest of twenty-two Girondists; the price of bread fixed at three sous per pound at the expense of the republic; and the general armament of the *sans culottes.* After these petitioners, the members composing the administration of Paris came to read a denunciatory address against the Girondists. "They have desired the destruction of Paris," said Lhuillier, their president. "If Paris should disappear from the face of the globe, it will be from having defended the unity of the republic against them! Posterity will avenge us! It is time, legislators, to terminate this combat. The reason of the people is weary of so much apathy. Let their enemies tremble! Their majestic anger is ready to break out. Let them tremble! The universe will quake from their vengeance. Isnard has excited civil war and the annihilation of the capital! We demand from you the decree of accusation against him and his accomplices, Brissot, Guadet, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Buzot, Barbaroux, Roland, Lebrun, and Clavière. Avenge yourselves on Isnard and Roland, and make a great example!"

XVII. Hardly was this address heard, when the crowd which followed the deputation seated themselves upon the benches of La Montagne. Vergniaud and Doulcet exclaimed against a confusion which stopped all discussion, and annulled the law. "Well, then," said Levasseur de la Sarthe, "let the deputies of La Montagne pass, *en masse*, on this side, (pointing to the empty benches on the right), "our places will be well kept by the petitioners!" La Montagne obeyed, and precipitated themselves to the side of the Girondists, in the right division of the hall. Vergniaud demanded that the commandant of the armed force should be summoned to receive the orders of the president. Valazé protested, in the name of four hundred thousand souls whom he represented, against any deliberation adopted under the dictation of insurrection.

Robespierre desired to speak. Vergniaud arose. "The National Convention," said he, "cannot deliberate in its present state; let us go and join the armed force, and place ourselves under the protection of the people."

Vergniaud, at these words, went out with some friends, but returned soon afterwards, either repulsed by the multitude, or having regretted leaving the tribune to his enemies. Robespierre already occupied it, and reproached the Assembly with the hesitation of its attitude, and the insignificance of its resolutions. Vergniaud, who heard these last words of the orator, demanded leave to speak.

Robespierre, regarding Vergniaud from the height of the tribune with disdain, said, "I will not occupy the Assembly with the flight and return of those who have deserted their posts. It is not by insignificant measures that one can save the country. Your Committee of Public Safety, the organ of Barrère, has made you many propositions. There is one which I adopt — it is that of the suppression of the Commission of Twelve. But do you believe that is sufficient to satisfy our disquieted friends of the safety of the country? No! Already has this commission been suppressed, and the course of treason has not been interrupted. Take against its members those vigorous measures which the petitioners have just indicated to you. There are men here who would desire to punish this insurrection as a crime! You would place, then, an armed force in the hands of those who desire to direct it against the people!" Here Robespierre appeared to desire to oppose, without explaining himself clearly, the different measures proposed under the circumstances. Vergniaud, weary of awaiting the blow which Robespierre thus balanced over his head, cried out, in a tone of impatience, "Conclude, then!" Violent murmurs broke out against Vergniaud at this apostrophe. Robespierre regarded his interrupter with a disdainful smile. "Yes, I am about to conclude," said he, "and against you! against you, who, after the revolution of the 10th of August, desired to conduct those to the scaffold who caused it! against you, who have incessantly provoked the destruction of Paris! against you, who desired to save the tyrant! against you, who conspired with Dumouriez! against you, who have persecuted with bitterness those same patriots, whose heads Dumouriez demanded! against you, whose criminal vengeance has provoked this insurrection, which you desire now to make the crime of your victims! My conclusion is the decree of accusation against the accomplices of Dumouriez, and against all those who have been designated by the petitioners."

Each of the conclusions of Robespierre, applauded by La Montagne, the petitioners, and the tribunes, deprived Vergniaud of every idea of replying. All the weight of the Convention and of the people seemed to crush the Girondists. They were silent. The decree proposed by Barrère was put to the vote. This decree contained, with the suppression of the twelve, some measures of hypocritical independence, which might save appearances in the eyes of the departments. It was voted without debate by La Plaine, as well as by La Montagne.

A feigned joy on one side, cruel on the other, broke out in the Assembly, and communicated itself from the tribunes to the exterior of the assemblage, which filled the hall. Bazire proposed to the Convention to go and fraternise with the people, and to mingle in the concord of all the citizens. This proposition was adopted with enthusiasm. Fear has also its alleviations. The Commune instantly caused Paris to be illuminated. The Convention proceeded, and, surrounded by torch-bearers, traversed, during the night, the principal quarters of the capital, followed by the sectionaries, and answering by their shouts to cries of "Vive la Republique!" The Girondists, trembling to signalise themselves by their absence, followed the *cortége,* and were present, with signs of forced joy, at the triumph over themselves. Condorcet, Pétion, Gensonné, Vergniaud, and Fonfrède were there. Louis XVI. was avenged: the conspirators of the 10th of August had their 20th of June.

This humiliating triumph, to which the people drew them already in chains, was the presage of their approaching fall, and the first derision cast on their long punishment. "Which do you prefer, — this ovation, or the scaffold ?" said Fonfrède, loudly enough to be heard, to Vergniaud, who walked with downcast brow by his side. "It is all the same to me," replied Vergniaud, with stoical indifference; "there is no choice between this walk and the scaffold; it conducts us to it."

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## BOOK XLII.

I. Whilst the Girondists thus followed the *cortége* of their defeat, the revolutionary committee sent armed agents to arrest Roland at his house. The genius and beauty of his wife, popular report, which converted his abode into the focus of conspiracy against the Montagne, the invectives of Marat, the insinuations of Robespierre, the perpetual allusions of the Jacobite journals to the occult influence of this family, and the name of Rolandists given to the Girondists, — thus confounding the pretended crimes of Roland with those attributed to his friends, — all prevented the people from forgetting the fallen minister. They feared him too much to pardon him, and believed that they arrested in his person a whole conspiracy against the republic.

At six in the evening, whilst his friends were yet struggling in the Convention, the sectionaries presented themselves at his abode, and ordered him to follow them, in the name of the revolutionary committee, exhibiting at the same time a written order. "I do not recognise the authority of this warrant," returned Roland, "and I will not voluntarily obey orders emanating from an illegal authority. If you employ violence, I can only oppose the resistance of a man of my age; but I will protest against it with my last breath." "I have no orders to employ violence," replied the bearer of the warrant. "I shall refer to the council of the Commune, and leave my men here to assure themselves of your person."

II. Madame Roland, equally indignant at this violation of the law, and the danger to which her husband was exposed, hastily wrote a letter to the Convention to demand redress. She, moreover, sent a note to the president, requesting admittance to the bar of the house, got into a hackney coach, and drove to the Tuileries. A deputy of La Plaine named Rozé, procured her an interview with Vergniaud. "Obtain entrance for me, and a hearing," said this courageous woman. "I will declare truths which will be useful to the republic, and arouse the Convention from its stupor, — an example of courage may shame the nation." Vergniaud persuaded her to relinquish her design, pressed her hand as if for a last farewell, and returned, touched and invigorated, to reply to Robespierre. Madame Roland quitted the Tuileries; and on her return home, the concierge informed her that her husband, freed from the surveillance of the sectionaries, had taken refuge in an adjoining house.[1] She hastened thither, but found that he had already quitted this asylum: she followed him, threw herself into his arms, informed him of what she had already attempted, rejoiced at his safety, — and again quitted him to endeavour to obtain admittance to the Convention.

III. It had been dark for the last two hours, and Madame Roland traversed the brilliantly lighted streets, without knowing of which party these illuminations celebrated the triumph. On her arrival at the Carrousel, where forty thousand men had so lately thronged, she found it silent and deserted. The sitting was ended, and a few sentinels only remained to guard the doors of the national palace. She questioned a group of *sans culottes*, who watched by a piece of cannon. They informed her that the Committee of Twelve was overthrown; that this sacrifice had reconciled the patriots; Paris had saved the republic; the reign of the traitors was at an end, and that the victorious municipality would soon order the arrest of the twenty-two. She returned home, stunned by this intelligence, embraced her sleeping daughter, and deliberated whether she should save herself from arrest by flight. The place where her husband had taken refuge could not conceal them both, and the only abode open to her would have given rise to calumnies which she dreaded more than death; and she resolved to await her doom at her own hearth. She had long steeled her heart against persecution, and even assassination; and, full of a double passion, — love devoid of weakness, and despairing patriotism,— she beheld in death only a refuge for her virtue, and a brilliant immortality for her name. She regretted nothing in life save her daughter, in whom she beheld the germ of her own talents, with more mental control to direct them. She had trusty friends to whom she could bequeath this treasure; and, relieved of this anxiety, she was ready for the worst. She wrote an account of the events of the day to Roland, and, overwhelmed by sorrow and fatigue, had just fallen asleep, when the sectionaries broke into her house, and caused her to be awakened by her *femme de chambre.* She arose, and, instantly divining their errand, dressed herself and made a packet of her garments, as though quitting her house for ever. The sectionaries awaited her in the salon, and presented to her the order of the Commune for her arrest. She requested permission to write to a friend, which was granted; but as the chief agent insisted on being made acquainted with the contents and address of the letter, she indignantly destroyed it, preferring to depart without bidding farewell to her friend, than denounce a friendship which would be perverted into a crime.

At daybreak she was torn from her weeping daughter and servants. "How much you are beloved," said the chief of the sectionaries, who had never seen in this beautiful and accomplished woman aught but the leader of an odious and calumniated party. "Because I love," returned Madame Roland, proudly. She was placed in a carriage, surrounded by *gens d'armes;* the populace crowded round, shouting "*A la guillotine!*" A commissary of the Commune asked Madame Roland if she wished to have the windows of the carriage closed. "No," returned she; "oppressed innocence should not assume the attitude of crime and shame. I do not fear the looks of honest men, and I brave those of my enemies." "You have much more resolution than many men," returned the commissary; "you calmly await justice." "Justice!" replied Madame Roland; "if there were justice, I should not be here. I shall go to the scaffold as fearlessly as I go to prison. I despise life." The doors of a prison closed on her; and all the virtues, the faults, the hopes, repentance, and heroism of her party seemed to enter the dungeon with her.

IV. The sitting of the Convention of the 1st of June was entirely occupied by the reading of the proclamation of the

Committee of Public Safety to the French people, drawn up and read by Barrère. This proclamation excused the insurrection as a fortunate illegality on the part of the people of Paris, and exhibited the Girondists as representatives of a too rigid virtue, whose errors the Convention had repaired; at the same time covering them with its inviolability. The Commune, intoxicated with its victory, assumed a more imperious tone, and met to complete their victory.

Marat presented himself at the tribune. "Rise, sovereign people," said he; "you have no resource but in your own energy. Your mandatories betray you. Present yourselves at the Convention, read your address, and do not depart until you have obtained an answer. After which you will act in a manner befitting your rights and interests." At the voice of Marat, the Commune nominated twelve commissaries, six from its own body, and six from the insurrectional committee, to bear the address to the Convention. The measures of the rising of the Parisians *en masse*, the pay of the *sans culottes*, the tocsin, the *rappel*, the alarm gun were voted.

V. On the other hand, the Committee of Public Safety, in whom the decree of the Convention had vested the powers they had torn from the Commission of Twelve, also deliberated. It was then principally composed of deputies of La Montagne, and a few neutralists of La Plaine. The Committee of Public Safety sat in secret, and was composed of only nine members; Barrère, Delmas, Bréard, Cambon, Robert Lindet, Guyton de Morveau, Treilhard, Lacroix d'Eure et Loire, and Danton. The committee, informed by its agents of the resolutions of the Commune, and the intended arrest of the twenty-two, passed the night and a part of the next day in deliberation. Pache, Garat, minister of the interior, and Bouchotte, minister of war, and tool of Pache's, were summoned before them. The opinions were divided. Pache, Bouchotte, and Garat did not conceal from the committee that the arrest of the twenty-two was the only measure which could calm the excitement of Paris. This cruel necessity of immolating their colleagues at the ostracism of the multitude, seemed repugnant even to Barrère. "We must see," said he to Pache, "who represents the nation — the National Convention or the Commune of Paris." Lacroix, a fanatical member of the Cordeliers' club, devoted to Danton, as the genius of the republic, did not venture to give an opinion before his master had spoken; and even Danton seemed for the first time undecided.

Garat lamented the imminence of the peril, and the fatal consequences of such a sacrifice made to the brutal force of the mob. Then, as if suddenly illuminated by one of those bright flashes which dispels darkness and difficulty, — "I see but one means of saving them," exclaimed he; "but it demands a degree of heroism for which I dare not hope in these corrupt times." "Speak," replied Danton; "our souls are worthy those of antiquity; the Revolution has not degraded human nature." "Well, then," returned Garat, with the hesitation of a man who sounds the abysses of the heart of another, without knowing whether he will find crime or virtue; "remember the quarrels of Themistocles and Aristides, which threatened the destruction of their country, by dividing it into two factions; Aristides saved his country by his greatness of soul. 'Athenians,' said he to the people, who wavered between himself and his rival, 'you will never be happy and tranquil until you have cast Themistocles and myself into the gulf into which you cast your criminals.'"

"You are right," cried Danton, seizing the allusion before Garat had applied it to the present circumstances. "You are right; the unity of the republic must, if necessary, triumph over our corpses. We and our enemies must exile ourselves in an equal number from the Convention, in order to restore to it strength and peace. I will hasten to propose this to our heroic friends of the Montagne, and I will offer to go as a hostage to Bordeaux."

The whole committee, carried away by the generosity of Danton, adopted this plan; which, whilst it left the honour of the sacrifice to the Montagne, saved the Girondists, and gave the victory to patriotism only.

But enthusiasm soon grows cold. Danton carried away a few of his friends by his example; the rest demanded time for reflection. He caused Robespierre to be sounded; but the latter, more politic and less generous, dissipated the illusions of Danton in the eyes of his friends. "His logic did not permit him to abdicate," he said, "not his power, for he had none, but the mandate of the people, which had assigned to him the post where he wished to die. The heroism of Danton was but the pity of a weak heart, which bends before its duty, and surrenders the Revolution to a few tears."

VI. Danton, Barrère, Lacroix, Garat, paralysed by the inflexibility of Robespierre, were compelled to abandon this project, and saw no chance of safety for the Convention save in the prompt and voluntary abdication of the twenty-two; and they strove to convince these deputies of the necessity of sacrificing themselves to the unity of the republic.

VII. The executive committee now sat permanently at the Hôtel-de-Ville, in a room adjoining the Council of the Commune, and was composed of Varlet, Dobsent, Dufourny, Hassenfratz, and Gusman,—all adherents of Marat. Marat inspired them with the idea of ordering the volunteer battalions, now marching to La Vendée, to retrograde on the capital, surround the Convention, and blockade it, until the twenty-two and the Committee of Twelve were surrendered. Whilst the emissaries of insurrection were sent to fetch these battalions, the alarm bells rang, and the drums beat to arms in all the quarters of Paris.

The Girondists, at the sound of the tocsin and the drums, met for the last time,—not to deliberate, but to prepare and fortify themselves against their death. They supped in an isolated mansion in the Rue de Clichy, amidst the tolling of bells, the sound of the drums, and the rattling of the guns and tumbrils. Henriot advanced to the Convention. These sounds did not deprive them of their calmness of mind, or even of those sallies of wit with which these intrepid men cheered their last interview. They accepted their destiny, and only discussed at the conclusion of their repast the manner in which they should undergo it, not for their own safety, but to bequeath a better example to the republic. All could have escaped, — none would fly. Pétion, so feeble in the face of popularity, was intrepid when he faced death; Gensonné, accustomed to the sight of war; Buzot, whose heart beat with the heroic impressions of his unfortunate friend, Madame Roland,—wished to await their death in their places in the Convention, and there invoke the vengeance of the departments. Barbaroux, with the ardour of the south, showed the arms he carried concealed beneath his clothes, and conjured his friends to follow his example, and revenge themselves by destroying the most dangerous of the assassins. Louvet blamed this useless heroism, and entreated his friends to fly, and rouse the departments. Vergniaud relied on chance and his genius, and would determine on nothing; in his eyes every road of the Revolution seemed to lead so surely to death, that he was indifferent which he chose. The force proceeding from despair only produces resignation. Vergniaud was the most eloquent of citizens,—he was not a combatant. "Let us drink to life or death," said he to Pétion, who sat opposite to him; "this night conceals in its shades the one or the other: let us not think of ourselves, but our country. Were this wine my blood, I would quaff it to the safety of the Republic." Stifled cries of "Vive la Republique!" answered the sublime words of Vergniaud. The unhappy Girondists were obliged to lower their voices whilst addressing their last adieus to their country, lest they should be overheard by the people, for whom they were about to die.

VIII. The sound of the tocsin, the roll of the drums, the alarm guns fired on the Pont Neuf, and the tramp of the armed *sectionnaires* hastening to their posts, announced to them that they had no time for deliberation; and they separated without resolving on any definite plan. Each took counsel from his illusions or his despair, his courage or his weakness; some escaped through the barriers, others went, to await the result of the sitting, at the houses of friends not suspected of federalism; the most generous and the most imprudent went to the Convention to die at their posts. Their seats were long vacant at the sitting in the evening, which began at ten. Already reports of their treason and flight were circulated by the Montagne, when the appearance of the most courageous of the twenty-two gave them the lie.

Marat's plan had been followed: Henriot had all night surrounded the Convention with the battalions of volunteers, recalled from the environs to the city. A hundred and sixty guns, and those battalions in whom the Commune placed less dependence, formed a second line round the Carrousel. A profound silence reigned in this army of citizens, which was no longer a meeting of seditious men, but a camp; and it was evident from the appearance of these troops, that they were resolved to obtain what they demanded from the national representation, even at the bayonet's point.

At daybreak the sitting was opened. Mallarmé was again president. More moderate than Hérault de Séchelles, he knew how to give violence the appearance of legality, and the Montagne intrusted to him the care of enveloping this proscription in all the dignity of the law. Lanjuinais mounted the tribune: "*A bas Lanjuinais!*" cried the tribunes; "He wishes to re-kindle civil war." "So long as it is permitted me to make my voice heard," returned Lanjuinais, "I will not suffer the character of a representative of the nation to be humbled in my person. I will speak the truth. It is but too true that, for the last three days, you have deliberated beneath the knife; a rival power domineers over you, and even now surrounds you. Within are their paid assassins! without their cannon. Crimes which the law punishes with death have been committed, and an usurpatory authority has fired the alarm gun." Geoffroy, Drouet, Legendre, Billaud-Varennes, and Julien, rushed towards the tribunes, to tear Lanjuinais from thence. The president covered his head: "Liberty is at an end," said he, "if such disorders continue." "What have you done?" replied Lanjuinais, boldly; "nothing for the dignity of the Convention; nothing for the inviolability of its members, whose very life for the last two days has been threatened." "Scoundrel," exclaimed Thuriot, "you have sworn to destroy the republic by your eternal calumnies." "An usurping assembly exists," continued the unmoved speaker, "deliberates, conspires, acts. A directing committee proclaims civil war, and this revolted Commune yet exists. Yesterday, when this rival and usurping authority surrounded you with arms and cannon, this petition was brought to you,—this list of your proscribed colleagues, found in the filth of Paris!" At these words La Montagne and the tribunes seemed to overwhelm Lanjuinais. The crowd that filled the corridors of the Convention uttered cries of death, and drove back the officers and guards of the Convention. These cries, these arms which rattled at a few paces from him, did not move Lanjuinais, who concluded by demanding the repression of the Commune, under the knives of its emissaries.

A deputation of the revolutionary authorities succeeded him. "Delegates of the people," said they, "during four days Paris has not laid down her arms; during four days her demands have been laughed at. The torch of liberty grows dim; the columns of equality are shaken. The counter-revolutionists raise their heads. Let them tremble; the thunder rolls, and will soon crush them. Representatives, the crimes of the factious members of the Convention are known to us. Save us, or we will save ourselves." Billaud-Varennes demanded that this petition, instantly referred to the Committee of Public Safety, should be discussed at this sitting. The Plaine demanded the order of the day. "The order of the day," cried Legendre, "is to save the country." At this hesitation of the Convention,—at these words of Legendre, which seemed a concerted signal between the Montagne and the people, the spectators and women raised the cry "To arms!" The pressure of the crowd burst open the doors, and the Convention believed its precincts forced by the populace. "Save the people from themselves," cried a deputy of the right, named Richon: "Save the lives of your colleagues by ordering their provisional arrest." "No, no!" returned the generous Lareveillière-Lépeaux, "no weakness; we will all share the fate of our colleagues!"

Levasseur, the friend of Danton, mounted the tribune; the enemy, but the frank and loyal foe, of the Gironde, he wished to purge the Convention without shedding the blood of his colleagues. "The provisional arrest of these twenty-two, is demanded," said he, "to protect them from the fury of the people. I maintain that they should be definitively arrested, if they have merited it. They have merited it, and I will prove it." At these words loud applause told the Girondists they were lost. Levasseur continued to enumerate in a long speech the crimes ascribed to the Girondists, and maintained, that were they innocent, they were at least suspected; and that therefore they should be arrested, and legally tried by the Convention.

The silence that followed Levasseur's speech attested the mental struggle of the Assembly. Barrère at length arrived from the Committee of Public Safety, and mounted the tribune to read the report of this committee. His features, smiling when he looked towards the Montagne, contracted when he looked towards the Plaine, foretold the resolutions of which he was the organ and inspirer. "The committee," said he, briefly, "has not, out of respect for the moral and political situation of the Convention, decreed the arrest of the twenty-two, but deems it better to address itself to their generosity and patriotism, and demand from them the voluntary suspension of their power, the only measure which can end the dissensions which harass the republic, and restore peace. The committee has taken measures to place these members under the protection of the people, and the armed force of Paris."

IX. The silence of the Montagne and the murmurs of the tribunes showed the Girondists that this measure but half appeased their enemies. Some of them hastened to seize it as a means of safety which would escape them unless instantly adopted. Isnard, lately the most impetuous, mounts with slow steps and dejected air, the tribune, as if to expiate his blasphemies against Paris. "When a man and the country are put in the same balance," said he, "I always lean towards the country. I declare that if my blood were necessary to the safety of my country, I would lay my head on the scaffold, and, with my own hands, loosen the steel that should deprive me of life. Our suspension is demanded as the only measure which can avert the calamities with which we are threatened. I suspend myself, and desire no other safeguard than that of the people." Isnard descended amidst the cries of some, and the felicitations of others

X. Lanjuinais mounted the tribune for the last time. "I believe," said he, in a voice firm as his conscience—"I believe that up to this moment I have displayed sufficient energy for you not to expect from me suspension or resignation." At this declaration the Montagne, the tribunes, and the people who thronged the hall, replied by imprecations and threats of death. Lanjuinais glanced disdainfully at this multitude, whose invectives drowned his voice. "When the ancient priests," said he, "dragged the victims to the altar, they covered them with flowers and garlands. Cowards! they did not insult them."

At this majestic image, heightened by the sinister analogy of the speaker with the victim, the priest with the people, the tumult ceased, and the people in their turn hung down their heads. "All is over," continued Lanjuinais. "We cannot quit this place, or even open the windows to demand justice from the nation; cannon are pointed against us; no legal wish can be uttered in this place. I am dumb." Barbaroux, less eloquent, but equally inflexible, succeeded Lanjuinais. "If my blood were necessary to the consolidation of liberty, I would shed it," said he. "If the sacrifice of my honour were necessary, I should say deprive me of it; posterity shall be my judge. If the Convention deems the suspension of my functions necessary, I will obey its decree; but I will never myself lay down the authority with which I have been invested by the people. Expect no resignation from me. I have sworn to die at my post, and I will keep my oath."

XI. Billaud-Varennes combated, like Marat, the weakness of Barrère's conclusions; when a new tumult broke out at the gates of the Assembly, and suspended for a moment all debate. Lacroix, the friend and confidant of Danton, secretly thrust by him into this crisis, precipitated himself into the interior, with outstretched arms, like a man who implored an asylum and vengeance against assassins. He assumed the attitude, the voice, and the gestures of fear. "Arms have been directed against my breast," said he. "The Convention is menaced with grape shot. We have sworn to live free or to die; well then, we must know how to die, to die freely!"

La Gironde and La Plaine confirmed the words of Lacroix. They attested that many of themselves had been repulsed in the hall, and had undergone outrage. Danton showed himself equally indignant. Barrère exclaimed that the humbled Convention could not make laws; that new tyrants watched over it; that this tyranny was in the revolutionary committee of the Commune; that that council enclosed wretches in its bosom (meaning the Spaniard Gusman, the friend and agent of Marat); that at that moment, and under the eyes of the Convention, insurrectionary pay was distributed to the troops which surrounded it. Danton supported Barrère, and demanded that the Committee of Public Safety should be charged to avenge the oppressed representation. A decree ordered the armed force to withdraw from the centre. Mallarmé, enfeebled in voice, yielded the presidency to Herault de Séchelles, the president of parade in days of weakness!

It may be that, had all the absent Girondists been present, if Vergniaud, whose moderation had captivated La Plaine, and silenced La Montagne, had uttered at this crisis one of his magnificent harangues, appeased the people by his promises, and caused the Convention to blush at the sight of its oppression, this endeavour of Lacroix and Danton to save the twenty-two heads would not have been fruitless. But all the orators of La Gironde were away or dumb. Barrère a second time aroused the Assembly! "Citizens," said he, "I repeat to you, let us know if we are free! I demand that the Convention should go and debate in the midst of the armed force, which will doubtless protect them."

At these words Herault de Séchelles descended from the chair, and placed himself at the head of a column of deputies disposed to follow him.

The Girondists and La Plaine hastened after them. La Montagne, indecisive, remained immovable. "Do not stir!" cried the Jacobins to them from the tribunes. "It is a snare into which the traitors wish to conduct the patriots. You will be murdered!" "What! you will abandon your colleagues, who are going to cast themselves into the midst of the people, and deliver them thus up to certain death, whilst making them believe that there are two Conventions, one within, another without, this centre?" replied, with gestures of appeal, the deputies of La Plaine. Danton threw himself generously into the midst of them. Robespierre deliberated a moment with Couthon, St. Just, and a group of Jacobins. They decided at last upon descending from their benches and joining the cortége.

The gates were opened at the sight of the president wearing the tricoloured scarf. The sentinels presented arms. The crowd gave free passage to the representatives. They advanced towards the Carrousel. The multitude which were on this space saluted the deputies. Cries of "Vive la Convention! Deliver up the twenty-two! Down with the Girondists!" mingled sedition with respect. The Convention, unmoved by these shouts, marched in procession towards the cannon, by which Henriot, the commandant-general, in the midst of his staff seemed to await them. Herault de Séchelles ordered Henriot to withdraw this formidable array, and to grant a free passage to the national representation. Henriot, who felt in himself the omnipotence of armed insurrection, caused his horse to prance, whilst receding some paces, and then said in an imperative tone to the Convention, "You will not leave this spot, until you have delivered up the twenty-two!" "Seize this rebel!" said Herault de Séchelles, to the soldiers, pointing with his finger to Henriot. The soldiers remained immovable. "Gunners, to your pieces! Soldiers, to arms!" cried Henriot to the troops. At these words, repeated by the officers along the whole line, a motion of concentration around the guns took place. The Convention retrograded. Herault de Séchelles passed with the deputies by the archway of the palace into the garden. There the faithful troops, posted at the end of the great walk upon the Place of the Revolution, called to the members of the Assembly with shouts, swearing to protect them with their bayonets. Herault de Séchelles directed his steps towards them. A troop of the insurgent sections barred his passage before attaining the Pont Tournant. The Convention, grouped around their president, hesitated and halted.

Marat, issuing then from a cross-walk, escorted by a column of young Cordeliers, who cried out "Vive l'ami du peuple," summoned the deputies, who had abandoned their posts, to return to them. The Convention, captives, but affecting to be somewhat satisfied with the step they were permitted to take, re-entered the hall. Couthon added derision within to the violence they had experienced without.

XII. A feigned, but unanimous, applause attested that nothing now remained to the Convention, not even the respect due to its situation. Legendre, Couthon, and Marat uttered, however, exclamations of pity in favour of those members of the Commission of Twelve who had protested against the arrest of Hébert and Varlet. They effaced from the list of the proscribed Fonfrède, Saint Martin, and some others.

Petitioners offered themselves as hostages to the departments whose deputies were to be imprisoned. "I require no bayonets to defend the liberty of my thoughts," answered

Barbaroux: "I have no need of hostages to protect my life. My hostages are the purity of my conscience, and the loyalty of the people of Paris, in whose hands I place myself." "And I," said Lanjuinais, — "I demand hostages, not for myself, who have long since made my life a sacrifice, but to prevent civil war from breaking out, and to maintain the unity of the republic." Not one insulting murmur responded to these last words of the twenty-two.

Barbaroux, Lanjuinais, Vergniaud, Mollevault, and Gardien, remained on their benches, vainly expecting the armed men who were to secure their persons, but not seeing them arrive, they retired to their own homes.

*Gens d'armes* were sent by the revolutionary committee, to watch over them in their dwellings.

XIII. Such was the political catastrophe of this party. It died as it was born — from sedition legalised by victory. The day of the 2d of June is still called the 31st of May, because the struggle, which lasted during three days, was to La Gironde the 10th of August. This party fell from weakness and indecision, as did the king, whom they had overthrown. The republic, which they had founded, crushed them after only eight months' existence. This group of republicans was honoured for their intentions, admired for their talents, deplored for their misfortunes, and regretted on account of their successors, and because their chiefs, by their fall, opened the lengthened vista to the scaffold.

There are two requisites for statesmen in order to direct the great movements in which they participate: perfect intelligence of those movements, and the feeling of which these impulses are the expression in a people. The Girondists had not thoroughly one or the other. In the Legislative Assembly they had long covenanted with the monarchy, badly received by them, and had not comprehended that a nation can scarcely ever be transformed and regenerated under the hand and under the name of the power from which it has just escaped. The republic, timidly planned by some amongst them, had been entertained rather as a fatal necessity than embraced as a system by the others. From the morrow of its proclamation, they had dreaded the fruit of their labour, as a mother who had been delivered of a monster. Instead of endeavouring to strengthen the rising republic, they had been solicitous of weakening it. The constitution which they proposed to it, bore the semblance of regret, rather than that of hope. They contested with it, one by one, each organ of its life and strength. Aristocracy revealed itself, under another form, in all their civic institutions. The popular cause felt itself from the first suppressed thereby. They defied the people. The people in their turn defied them. The head dreaded the arm, the arm feared the head. Society was compelled to be in tumult, or to languish.

The Girondists, also, after their accession, had defied concession, and resisted defeat. The 10th of August had wrested from them the throne, the preservation of which they still dreamt of, even in the decree wherein Vergniaud proclaimed the dethronement of the king. Danton had snatched from them the proscriptions of September, which they had not known how to prevent by a display of force, or to punish by protecting the victims of their own body. Robespierre had exacted from them the head of Louis XVI., cowardly surrendered in exchange for their own. Marat had wrested from them his impunity and triumph after his accusation on the 10th of March. The Jacobins had deprived them of the ministry in the person of Roland. Lastly, Pache, Hébert, Chaumette, and the Commune now wrung from them their abdication, and left them only their lives. Feeble within, they had been unfortunate without. Dumouriez, their warrior, had betrayed the republic, and cast upon them, by his treason, the suspicion of their participation. Their armies without chiefs, without discipline, and without recruits, fell from defeat to defeat. The fortified towns of the north were given up, or protected only by their walls. Royalism conquered the west, federalism dislocated the south, anarchy paralysed the centre, and factions tyrannised over the capital. The Convention, rich in orators, but without political leaders, wavered in their hands, admiring their discourses, but ridiculing their acts.

XIV. With some more months of such a government, France, half conquered by the foreigner, reconquered by the counter-revolution, torn to pieces by her own hands, and devoured by anarchy, would have ceased to exist, either as a republic or a nation. All must have perished in the hands of these declaimers.

It was necessary either for resignation to perish with them, or to strengthen the government. Force acquired the upper hand. It seized, as it had done on the 10th of August, on that dictatorship which no one as yet had dared to assume in the Convention. The insurrection of the Commune, although fomented and directed by evil passion, was presented to the eyes of the patriots as the insurrection of public safety. The people, seeing clearly that they were about to perish, seditiously seized the helm with their own hands, and wrested it from those who shrank from it. The people considered they exercised in this their supreme right, the right of existence. They were accused of having arrogated to themselves the initiative over the departments, and of having substituted the will of Paris for the will of France. What could the departments do, said the patriots of the 31st of May, at the distance they were situated from passing events? Before they could have been consulted, before they could have answered, before their weight of opinion, or armed bodies, could have reached Paris, the coalesced forces would have been at its gates; the Vendeans at the gates of Orleans, — the republic smothered in its cradle. In extreme danger, proximity constitutes a right. It belongs to that party of the people most approximated to public danger, first to provide against it. In such a case, the reach of the arm is the measure of power. A town then exercises the dictature of its position, relying upon ratification afterwards. Paris had exercised it several times before and after 1789. France did not reproach her either for the 11th of July, the Tennis Court, or even for the 10th of August, when Paris had acquired for her, without consulting or awaiting her, the Revolution, and the republic.

Besides, whatèver may be the theories of abstract equality amongst the towns of an empire, these theories unfortunately yield to fact under exceptional circumstances; and that fact possesses its own right, for it is justified by its necessity. Without doubt those cities which are the seats of government are but members of the national body; but this member is the head. The capital of a nation exercises over its members an initiative power, that of leading and resolving, connected with the most energetic feelings, of which the head is the seat, in a nation as well as in an individual. Strict polemics may with reason contest this right:

history cannot deny it. In times of no excitement, a government is everywhere equally proportioned. In the hour of extremity, the government is, not by right, but by fact, everywhere, where it is in possession. The 31st of May was illegal: who justified it? But was the 10th of August legal? It was, however, the title of the Girondists. What party could then legitimately invoke the law? None. All had violated it. Law there was not, in this reciprocal and continued usurpation, either in La Montagne, in La Gironde, in the Commune, in Paris, or in Bordeaux. The law existed no longer, or rather, the law was the instinct of preservation in a great people. The law was the Revolution itself! A people, led astray by their patriotism, thought to promulgate it in the midst of the tumult and sedition of these three days. It was disorder; but in their eyes, however, it was the law, for this violence appeared to them the only measure which could save the country and the Revolution. "The 10th of August," said they, in speaking of it, "alone saved liberty; the 31st of May saved the nation."

## BOOK XLIII.

I. After this day, when the people made no other use of their power than to display and to exercise the pressure of Paris over the representation, they separated without committing any excess.

They considered they had delivered the Convention from the yoke of the ambitious, and the plots of traitors. That sufficed them. They were ready to obey the Convention, provided they thought it free. No endeavour to urge them further could have led them to establish a tyranny.

One man only wished, for his personal ambition, to render the motion abortive. That man was Marat. He was baffled, and was obliged to exonerate himself to the Jacobins from the accusation of aspiring to the dictatorship.

II. Marat reprimanded for his ambition. Danton was in his turn reproached for his supineness, and conduct towards the Girondists. The same Varlet who had proposed the most atrocious steps towards the Girondists in the committee of the Archbishopric dared to attack Danton in the tribune of the Cordeliers, in the midst of his friends, and in the very focus of his power. Varlet thought that the moment to break this gigantic popularity and to found his own upon its wreck, had arrived. In fact, Danton already tottered.

Camille Desmoulins defended his patron against Varlet's insinuations, by displaying before the people the revolutionary titles of the man of the 10th of August and the 2d of September.

The credit of Danton issued still unsullied from this struggle. Camille Desmoulins having come in the evening to relate to him this insolence of Varlet, "I thank you," said Danton, "for having avenged me of this reptile. When the people shall have found another Danton they may be ungrateful with impunity, and sacrifice me to their caprice. But I do not fear," added he, striking his forehead with the palm of his hand; "here are two heads, one to incite the Revolution, another to guide it."

III. La Montagne caused the committees to be reinstated on the morrow, with the exception of that of public safety. They threw into the majority their most decided members. The impulse of the evening impressed them with the strength of the multitude. They deposed those ministers suspected of attachment to the conquered; sent commissioners into the doubtful departments; annulled the project of the constitution proposed by the Girondists; and charged the committee of safety to draw up in eight days a project for the constitution, entirely democratical. They pressed forward the recruiting and armament of the revolutionary army — that levy of patriotism *en masse*. They decreed a forced loan of a million upon the rich. They sent one after the other, accused upon accused, to the revolutionary tribunal. Their sittings were no longer deliberations, but cursory motions, decreed on the instant by acclamation, and sent immediately to the different committees for execution. They stripped the executive power of the little independence and responsibility it heretofore retained. Continually called into the bosom of their committees, ministers became no more than the passive executors of the measures they decreed.

From this day, also, discussion was at an end: action was all. The disappearance of the Girondists deprived the Revolution of its voice. Eloquence was proscribed with Vergniaud, with the exception of those few days when the great party chiefs, Danton and Robespierre, spoke, not to refute opinion, but to intimate their will, and promulgate their orders. The Assemblies became almost mute. A dead silence reigned henceforth in the Convention.

IV. In the meanwhile the twenty-two Girondists, the members of the Commission of Twelve, and a certain number of their friends, warned of their danger by this first blow of ostracism, fled into their departments, and hurried to protest against the mutilation of the country. The victims of the 31st of May had not been cast into the dungeons after the first day. The Commune contented itself with having exiled them from their seats as legislators. The greater number of those who had awaited the issue of the insurrection of the 2d of June at the house of Meilhan, in the Rue St. Honoré, had already taken this step. The others escaped one by one. Robespierre, Danton, the Committee of Public Safety, and even the people themselves, seemed to shut their eyes to these evasions, as if desirous to be rid of victims whom it would pain them to strike.

V. Buzot, Barbaroux, Guadet, Louvet, Salles, Pétion, Bergoing, Lesage, Cressy, Kervélégan, and Lanjuinais, threw themselves into Normandy; and after having traversed it, inciting all the departments between Paris and the Ocean, established at Caen the focus and centre of insurrection against the tyranny of Paris. They gave themselves the name of the Central Assembly of Resistance to Oppression. Biroteau and Chasset had arrived at Lyons. The armed sections of this town were agitated with contrary, and already bloody commotion. Brissot fled to Moulins, Rabaut Saint Etienne to Nismes. Grangeneuve, sent by Vergniaud, Fonfrède, and Ducos, to Bordeaux, raised troops ready to march upon the capital. Toulouse followed the same impulse of resistance to Paris.

The departments of the west were on fire, and rejoiced to see the republic, torn into contending factions, offer them the aid of one of the two parties for the restoration of royalty. The mountainous centre of France, where the Parisian yoke was less accepted, and where the distance of the frontiers rendered exterior dangers less alarming, was agitated. Le Tarn, Le Lot, L'Aveyron, Le Cantal, Le Puy de Dôme, L'Hérault, L'Ain, L'Isère, Le Jura, in all sixty-two departments, declared themselves at variance with the Convention. These departments charged their constituted authorities to take every measure to avenge the national representation. They reciprocally sent deputations to combine their revolt. Marseilles enrolled ten thousand men at the voice of Rebecqui and the young friends of Barbaroux. They imprisoned the commissioners of the Convention, Roux and Antiboul. Royalty, always brooding in the south, insensibly transformed this movement of patriotism into a monarchical insurrection. Rebecqui, in despair at the involuntary blows which he directed at the republic, and at seeing loyalty avail itself of the rising of the south, escaped remorse by suicide, throwing himself into the sea. Lyons and Bordeaux likewise imprisoned the envoys of the Convention as Maratists. The first columns of the combined army of the departments began to move in all directions. Six thousand Marseillais were already at Avignon, ready to reascend the Rhone, and form a junction with the insurgents of Nismes and of Lyons. Brittany and Normandy uniting, concentrated their first forces at Evreux.

VI. Without, the situation of the Convention was no less perilous. England blockaded all our ports. An army of a hundred thousand men — English, Dutch, and Austrians — entered upon the departments of the north. Condé, blockaded, saw General Dampierre expire in endeavouring to defend it. Valenciennes, bombarded by three hundred pieces of ordnance, was but a mass of cinders protected by impenetrable ramparts. The emigrants, the Austrians, and the Prussians, had passed the Rhine, and threatened the departments of Alsace with an invasion of more than a hundred thousand fighting men.

Custine and our garrisons on the Rhine scarcely kept them in check. This general, entrenched in the lines of Wissembourg, thought of seeking refuge in Strasburg. Mayence, abandoned with a garrison of twenty thousand chosen soldiers, thus paralysed for active warfare, defended itself heroically against the attacks of General Kalkreutz, at the head of seventy thousand men. The king of Prussia, in the midst of another armed force, in the face of Custine, awaited only the news of the surrender of Mayence to strike the last blow. From Strasburg to the Alps the Girondist insurrection aroused Franche-Comté, and rendered the approach of Haut Jura practicable to the intrigues and arms of the emigrants. The only alliance amongst factions is a common enemy.

VII. Twenty thousand young volunteers of Franche-Comté, urged to royalism by their indignation against the Montagnards and Marat, were ready to descend upon Lyons and Mâcon, to swell the army of the south marching against Paris. Eighty thousand Savoyards and Piedmontese, posted on the heights of the Comté of Nice and at the confluence of the high passes of the Alps of Savoy, menaced Toulon, Grenoble, and Lyons. These foreign troops offered the royalists of the interior their armed succour against the tyrants of the republic. Biron, who commanded the army of Italy, had but some thousands of discouraged and undisciplined troops to cover at once Provence and the frontier. In the Pyrenees, our war with Spain, effeminate and inglorious on both sides, was confined to the passes, leaving our provinces of Roussillon under the shock of an always delayed but always imminent invasion. The disasters of the revolutionary army in La Vendée completed this tableau of the calamity of the republic and the extremity of the Convention. Power existed no longer but in the heart. Not to despair of the struggle which the concentrated republic had to sustain in Paris, it was necessary to have in the soul the entire faith of the nation in liberty. The Convention possessed that faith, and devoted itself, and devoted France, either to death or to this grand work. This was its glory, its excuse, and its safety. Danton and Robespierre, the Commune of Paris, and the Jacobins, maintained its energy to the level of its danger, sometimes by the enthusiasm, sometimes by the terror, which they impressed upon it. They placed it between the counter-revolution and the scaffold. It had but the choice of deaths: it chose a glorious one, and resolved to combat against all hope.

VIII. To show that it did not despair of the future, the

Convention voted, after some days' debate, the new constitution, of which it had charged the committee of public safety to present a scheme. Herault de Séchelles read the report.

Robespierre, whose principles had prevailed in this conception, defended it in the Jacobins against the attacks of aggravated demagogues, such as Roux and Chabot. "Mistrust," said he, "these *ci-devant* priests, who are linked with the Austrians. Beware of the fresh mask with which the aristocrats are about to cover themselves."

The Jacobins, who affected always to preserve the advantage of moderation over the Cordeliers, and who owed to this reflecting and politic character of their acts a part of their power, applauded Robespierre's speech. They sent a deputation, of which Collot d'Herbois was the orator, to supplicate the Cordeliers to silence the detractors of the constitution, and to rally every heart to a work which time would render yet more popular. The Cordeliers, influenced by the Jacobins, chased from their society, as disturbers and anarchists, Roux and Leclerc des Vosges, and pardoned Varlet, in consideration of the ardour of his youth.

The constitution, thus sanctioned by the two sovereign societies of opinion in Paris, and shielded by the Ægis of Robespierre, was sent to all the municipalities of the republic, to be presented to the acceptation of the French people, convoked in primary assemblies.

As regarded Danton, he threw this constitution at the people as a toy which he considered already broken. He only regarded the people for their power; he thought little of liberty, and disquieted himself less about the future, — he was of that race of men who only put down a tyranny by tyranny still greater.

IX. Report then spread that the Convention, embarrassed with the Girondist captives in Paris,—neither daring to sentence nor acquit them,—proposed to make a sacrifice to peace, and a reconciliation with the departments, by granting an amnesty to the twenty-two.

In effect such was the advice of Danton: useless severity oppressed him; and the remembrance of September made him shrink from murder.

Valazé, indignant at the outrage concealed under such a pardon, wrote to the Convention, that he could not believe this project of the Committee of Public Safety,—that liberty was less dear to him than honour,—and that he should reject the pardon with disgust. Vergniaud, equally intrepid, and who threw defiance at his conquerors from the depth of his prison, wrote a letter in the same sense. "I demand a trial," said he: "If I am guilty, I have placed myself voluntarily in a state of arrest, and offer my head as expiation for the treasons of which I may be convicted. If my calumniators do not produce their proof against me, I in my turn demand that they be sent to the scaffold. Citizens — my colleagues — I appeal to your conscience; your justice will in its turn be judged by posterity." The remainder of the Girondist party, encouraged by the rising of the departments, repaired in a body to the sitting of the Convention, to support the reading of these letters and petitions in favour of the proscribed. "They are firebrands of civil war that are thrown to you," cried Legendre; "hasten to extinguish them, by passing contemptuously to your debates." The Convention dismissed these petitions. Barrère read a report of the Committee of Public Safety. He therein glorified the 31st of May, demanding severe measures to bring back the Jacobins and the Commune to respect for the supreme power concentrated in the Convention. "Men of La Montagne," said Barrère, in conclusion, "doubtless you have not placed yourselves upon the most elevated point to raise yourselves above truth: deign then to hear it. Do not pronounce your opinion hastily upon the culpability of the colleagues whom you have cast from your bosom, and give, whilst awaiting judgment, hostages to the alarmed departments." Robespierre, Lacroix, Thuriot, and Legendre, were indignant at this weakness. Robespierre was astonished that they had dared to call in question what the people had decided.

It was announced at the same moment to the Convention, that the administrators of the insurgent departments had arrested the commissioners Romme, prior of the Côte-d'or, and Ruhl, prior of Marne. "I know Ruhl," exclaimed Couthon; "he will yet be free, in the face of all the cannon of Europe." The prompt punishment of the rebel administrators was demanded by acclamation. Some members of the right proposed feeble or perfidious measures of expediency. Danton seemed to arouse at these words from his inexplicable lethargy. "What," said he, "do they seem to doubt the republic? It is in the moment of a great delivery that political bodies, as physical ones, appear threatened with immediate destruction. We are surrounded by tempests! the thunder growls! well, then! it is from the midst of its lightning that the work will issue which will immortalise the French nation. Recall to yourselves, citizens, what passed at the time of the conspiracy of La Fayette! Recall the state of Paris then, — patriots oppressed, proscribed, and menaced everywhere, — the greatest misfortunes suspended over us! We are to-day in the same situation; it appears that danger only affects those who have created liberty! La Fayette and his faction were soon unmasked. This day the new enemies of the people are already in flight under false names. That Brissot, — that Coryphée of the impious sect which is about to be scotched,—that man who boasted of his courage, and prided himself on his indigence, in accusing me — me — of being covered with gold, — is only a wretch! to whom the people of Moulins have done justice, in arresting him as a conspirator. It is said that the insurrection in Paris caused the movements in the departments! I declare in the face of the universe, these events will be the glory of this great city! I declare it in the face of France, but for the cannon of the 31st of May, the conspirators would have ruled us! Let the crime of this insurrection fall back upon us!"

X. This proud defiance to posterity met with an unanimous echo from La Montagne. Danton associated himself with the victorious insurrection of the 31st of May, and bestowed upon it before France the baptism of patriotism.

Couthon converted into a motion the enthusiasm excited by his language, and caused not only the amnesty of the bands who besieged the Convention to be voted, but moreover the eulogy of the Commune of the people, and even of the Insurrectional Committee of Paris, during the days of the 31st of May, and 1st and 2d of June.

Ducos, who had remained with Fonfrède upon the deserted benches of the Jacobins, endeavoured to appease the anger of the conquerors, and to obtain their indulgence in favour of his colleagues. He was answered by murmurs. Vergniaud was accused of having desired to corrupt the *gens d'armes* who guarded him. The escape of Lanjuinais and Pétion, who were gone to rejoin their colleagues at Caen, was alluded to. Robespierre demanded the immediate report upon the detained deputies.

"What, is it here," he said, "that a parallel dare be drawn between the Convention and certain conspirators? Is it here that the language of La Vendée is held?" This injurious apostrophe to the right side was received with denials and murmurs. "I demand," said Legendre, who affected fanaticism for Robespierre; "I demand that the first rebel—the first of these insurrectionists (crushing by his gesture the friends of Vergniaud), who shall interrupt the orator—be sent to the Abbey." "If you wish to know their crimes," continued Robespierre, — "their crimes, citizens, are the public calamities, — the audacity of conspirators, — the coalition of the tyrants of Europe; the laws which they have prevented us from making, and the holy constitution which has been raised since they have been no more! Citizens, let no pusillanimity induce you to tamper with the guilty: the people are your own."

XI. Fonfrède tried to obtain that the decree of imprisonment against his friends should indicate at least some private prison wherein they might be locked up, without confounding them with criminals. Cold indifference alone awaited him. The wives and children of the captives implored permission to partake the lot of their relatives. La Montagne accepted or rejected these private petitions according to its partiality for or against the parties. This discussion was prolonged. Drouet accused Brissot of seeking flight, and Vergniaud of having made his gaolers drunk. "Let us cease," said Robespierre at last, "to occupy ourselves with individuals. Let us leave these wretches to the remorse which will follow." They were soon apprised of the flight of Kervélégan and Biroteau. "What is their crime?" exclaimed a voice from La Plaine. "Their crime," replied Maure, "consists in their flight."

XII. At last St. Just, instigated by Robespierre, read the definitive report upon the events of the 31st of May. This report, embracing in one single document all the calumnies of Camille Desmoulins against the Girondists, transformed that party into a vast conspiracy to re-establish abolished royalty, and to deliver the republic over to foreigners. Federalism was depicted as the constant and systematic aim of that party. "Behold!" said Saint Just on concluding, "they wished to enslave you in the name of your safety. They treated you as that king of Cyprus who was fettered with chains of gold. Marseilles and Lyons, ready to ally themselves to La Vendée, are a prey to their emissaries. Tyrants, more odious than Pisistratus, they would murder the son who required his father at their hands, and the mother who wept for that son. Buzot excited L'Eure and Le Calvados; Pétion, Louvet, and Barbaroux assisted him. The popular meetings were closed, and the patriots maltreated. At Nismes a government commission was established. Everywhere blood flowed. Bordeaux heard the cry of Vive le roi! mingled with execration against the Convention. Did you hear the cries of those whom they assassinated? The liberty of the world, and the rights of man, are shut up with you in Paris. They will not perish. Your destiny is stronger than your enemies. You owe them nothing since they desolate the country. It is the fire of liberty which itself has purged you, as the ebullition of metals casts forth from the crucible the impure dross. Let them rest alone with their crimes. Proscribe those who are there, judge the others, and afterwards forgive. You do not desire to be implacable."

This report offered amnesty to the insurgent departments. It resolved itself into a decree. This decree declared Buzot, Barbaroux, Gorsas, Lanjuinais, Salles, Louvet, Bergoing, Biroteau, and Pétion, traitors to their country; it placed in accusation Gensonné, Guadet, Vergniaud, Mollevault, and Gardien, who were detained in Paris. It recalled Bertrand, a member of the Commission of Twelve, to the bosom of the Convention. Chabot, on the termination of this report, demanded and obtained a decree of accusation against Condorcet, who had just courageously defended his friends in an address to the French.

XIII. Whilst the Convention was thus rigorous at home, it carried on a desperate struggle abroad. Its commissaries, combating in every direction against the Girondist emissaries, raised the sections, rallied the troops, marched at their head against the first gathering, and crushed the insurrection in the bud. General Carteaux cut off the road to Lyons from the Marseillais volunteers, and put them to flight near Avignon. Bordeaux remained undecided as to whether she would avenge her deputies or obey La Montagne. But the focus of the federal insurrection was at Caen, in Normandy and Brittany. Let us cast a glance upon this town and these provinces.

The eighteen deputies who had taken refuge in Caen were Barbaroux, Bergoing, Boutedoux, Buzot, Duchâtel, de Cuny, Gorsas, Guadet, Kervélégan, Lanjuinais (for some days only), Guadet, Larivière, Lesage d'Eure-et-Loire, Louvet, Meilhan, Mollevault, Salles, Valady, and Pétion, who was accompanied by his son, a child of ten years old. They had been rejoined by three young writers, devoted to their cause and to their fate, — these were Girey-Dupré, Riouffe, and Marchenna.

These deputies had thrown themselves into Caen, *en masse*, because this town had not waited for their provocation to pronounce itself against the day of the 31st of May, and the violation of the national representation. For some months, the Jacobins of Caen, indignant at the doctrine of La Montagne, had openly broken with the society of the Jacobins of Paris. On the very night of the 31st of May, the council of the department of Calvados had voted the formation of a departmental army, destined to assure the liberty of the Convention. "We will not lay down our arms," said the address, drawn up in the same assembly, "until after having annihilated the proscribers and the factions." A meeting took on itself the government of the insurrection. It decreed the command of the troops to General Wimpfen, an old constitutional deputy. M. de Wimpfen was from Bayeux. Remaining faithful to his country, he was still a royalist at heart. The insurrectional assembly caused two commissaries from the Convention, Romme and Prieur, of the Montagnard party, to be arrested. They were confined in the chateau of Caen. It was during this imprisonment that Romme thought of the plan of the *republican almanac*, which was to remove from time itself all impression and tradition of the past.

The fugitive deputies arrived successively at Caen, during the early part of June. Each of them on his arrival presented himself to the insurrectional committee, and excited the minds of the federalists by the recital of their private prosecutions. The town granted them hospitality at the ancient hall of administration. They remained spectators, rather than actors, in the insurrection, which rapidly increased by some regiments in garrison at Caen and in its environs, and by some battalions of volunteers, composed of the chosen youth of Rennes, Lorient, and of Brest. The advanced guard of these troops, under the command of M. de Puisaye, a returned emigrant, devoted to the king, was posted at Evreux. M. de Puisaye beheld in the insurrection only the overthrow of the republic. Once a conqueror, he thought he could easily make his troops change colours, and restore constitutional royalty. This man was at once an orator, a diplomatist, and a soldier,—a character eminently adapted for civil war, which produces more adventurers than heroes. M. de Puisaye had already passed a whole year concealed in a cavern in the midst of the forests of Brittany, where, by his manœuvres and correspondence, he kindled the fire of revolt against the republic.

He now assumed the tri-coloured banners and the opinions of the Girondists. His soldiers mistrusted him. General Wimpfen remained at Caen with the principal force. He tried in vain to strengthen himself by voluntary enrolments. The emissaries of La Montagne, dispersed throughout the department, extinguished and discouraged the movement. They trembled lest liberty should succumb in this combat offered in her name.

M. de Puisaye marched his troops, to the number of 2000 men, upon Vernon. But having imprudently encamped them in the neighbourhood of Brécourt, and personally abandoned them during the night of the 13th of July, some discharges of cannon from the troops of the Convention were sufficient to disperse them. This repulse was the signal of the defeat of the mustered forces in every direction. The troops of Bretons themselves retraced their route to their departments. Robert Lindet, commissary of the Convention, returned to Caen without opposition. The deputies now only thought of their safety. Wimpfen offered to assure them an asylum in England. They refused, for fear of confounding their cause with that of the emigrants.

The same indolence which had destroyed them at Paris destroyed them at Caen. None of them developed those resources of character and mind which supply the lack of numbers and create the means of action. They contemplated their fate without endeavouring to help it. They lost days in dry debate with the members of the insurrectional committee. Barbaroux occupied himself with poetry, as if in the leisure of a happy life. He excused himself for his vote of death in the process of the king. "It was not my personal opinion," said he; "it was the wish of my constituency; I was bound to express it."

Pétion appeared absorbed in the cares he bestowed on his son.

Louvet and Barbaroux went to Lisieux, with the intention of marching with the advanced guard upon Paris. They arrived there at the moment when the disbanded troops of Puisaye were retreating towards Caen. One of their friends, who fled with the troops of that general, found Barbaroux lying on the floor of his chamber in an inn at Lisieux. He announced to him the defeat of Vernon. Barbaroux returned to Caen. Valady and he never separated. "Barbaroux," said Valady, "is a sublime idler, who, in ten years, will be a great man!" Girey-Dupré composed insurrectional stanzas to replace those of the *Marseillaise* in the struggle against La Montagne.

Pétion justified himself with indignation from the suspicion of having participated in the massacres of September. His honest countenance belied such atrocious imputations. "Behold!" said Barbaroux of him,—"behold the man they want to pass off as an assassin."

Guadet had a tragical appearance, speech, and countenance. "Always an orator," said Barbaroux jestingly of him.

They displayed at Caen more indifference to their fate, than character to redeem it. They excited more curiosity than enthusiasm. All proved abortive under their hands. Their civil war was but a commotion which did not even approach the ramparts of Paris. The republic which they had created refused them even a field of battle, and reserved them only for the scaffold.

XIV. Every day the suspicion of federalism sent to the revolutionary committee those whom this name pointed out to the vengeance of the people. Marat incessantly stigmatised with this name all those who leaned to the proscribed deputies, either from opinion or from attachment. Marat had constituted himself, since his triumph, the public accuser of the Commune, of the Cordeliers, and even of the Convention. The hesitation of Danton, the slothfulness of Robespierre, and the moderation of the Jacobins at this time elevated Marat to the apogee of his popularity and power. He dared to do all he dreamed of. His feverish imagination no longer placed a limit to his delirium. He affected great contempt for the Convention. He disdained to assist at the meetings. He shrugged his shoulders at the names of Robespierre and Danton, both of them incapable, he said, — the one deficient in virtue, the other in genius, — to accomplish a revolution, and regenerate a people. His head swam with the height to which his madness had conducted him. He thought to sum up in his own person the whole right of the numbers, the cause, and the will of the multitude. He adored in himself the divinity of the people.

XV. This worship which he had for himself, he had inspired the ignorant and turbulent part of the nation with, and particularly the populace of Paris. Marat was in their eyes the acmé of patriotism. "We must have Marat," said Camille Desmoulins to Danton, to excuse himself for his adulation towards this man; "as long as we have Marat with us, the people will have confidence in our opinions, and will not abandon us; for beyond the opinion of Marat, all is nought. He goes in advance of every one, and no one can supersede him."

After the expulsion of the Girondists, he had excepted against himself as deputy, not wishing, he said, to pronounce as a judge upon those whom he considered as personal enemies. His judgment was insurrection. He disdained the judgment of the Convention, and the blade of the law. Devoured by a slow fever, and by a hideous leprosy, the visible scum of the ebullition of his blood, he scarcely issued forth from the dark and retired dwelling he inhabited. Thence, unseen and ill, he ceased not to publish proscriptions to the people, to point out the suspected, to mark down victims with his finger, and to promulgate his orders to the Convention itself. The Convention heard his letters with real disgust, but with affected deference. The Girondists dispersed in the departments, to increase the horror of

France against their enemies, gave them the name of Maratistes. This opprobrious denomination had still further raised Marat in the imagination of the multitude. The departments summed up in this man all the terror, all the horror, and all the anarchy of the moment. By personifying crime in this living and sinister being, they rendered crime itself more terrible and odious.

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# BOOK XLIV.

I. But whilst Paris, France, the leaders and the armies of the factions were thus preparing to rend the republic to atoms, the shadow of a grand idea was flitting over the mind of a young girl, which was to disconcert events and men, by throwing the arm and the life of a female athwart the destiny of the Revolution. It would seem as though Providence deigned to mark out the greatness of the deed by the weakness of the hand, and took pleasure in contrasting two species of fanaticism in bodily conflict — the one beneath the hideous guise of popular vengeance, in the person of Marat; the other under the heavenly charm of love of country, in a Jeanne d'Arc of liberty: each, notwithstanding, ending, through their mistaken zeal, in murder, and thus unfortunately presenting themselves before posterity, not as an end, but as a means, — not by the aspect, but the hand, — not by the mind, but by blood!

II. In a large and thronged street which traverses the city of Caen, the capital of Normandy, at that time the focus of the Girondist insurrection, there stood at the bottom of a courtyard an ancient habitation, with grey walls, stained by the weather and dilapidated by time. This building was styled *le Grand Manoir*. A fountain with stone brim, covered with moss, occupied one angle of the courtyard. A narrow low door, whose fluted lintels uniting in an arch over the top, exposed the worn steps of a winding staircase which led to the upper story. Two windows, with their small octagon panes of glass held in lead-work, feebly lighted the staircase and the empty chambers. The misty daylight in this antique and obscure abode impressed on it the character of vagueness, mystery, and melancholy, which the human fancy likes to see spread as a shroud over the cradle of deep thoughts and the abodes of strongly imaginative minds. Here resided, at the commencement of 1793, a grand-daughter of the great French tragedy writer, Pierre Corneille. Poets and heroes are of the same race. There is between them no other difference than that which exists between idea and fact. The one does what the other conceives; but the thought is wholly the same. Women are naturally as enthusiastic as the one, and as courageous as the other. Poetry, heroism, and love inherit the same blood.

III. This house belonged to a poor woman, a widow, childless, aged, and infirm—a Madame de Bretteville. With her had lived for some years a young female relative, whom she had adopted and brought up, in order to comfort her old age and relieve her from utter isolation. This girl was then in her twenty-fourth year. Her serious but fine features—grave, yet very beautiful—seemed to have received the imprint of this dull abode and sequestered existence. There was in her something not of this earth. The inhabitants of the district who saw her walking out with her aged aunt on Sundays in order to go to church, or caught a glimpse of her through the doorway, reading for hours at a time in the courtyard, seated in the sunshine at the brink of the fountain, relate that their admiration of her was mingled with *prestige* and respect, arising from that strength of mind which, beaming forth, intimidates the vulgar eye,—or that deep feeling of the soul imprinted on her features,—or that presentiment of a tragic destiny which, anticipating the event, stamps its mark upon the brow.

This young creature was tall, without exceeding the usual height of the high-statured and well-proportioned women of Normandy. Natural grace and dignity, like the rhythm of poetry, displayed itself in her steps and action. The ardour of the south mingled itself in her complexion with the high colour of the women of the north. Her hair seemed black when fastened in a large mass around her head, or arranged in clusters on each side of her brows. It seemed gold coloured at the points of the tresses, like the ear of corn, deeper and more lustrous than the wheat-stalk in the sunlight. Her eyes, large and expanding almost to her temples, were of a colour variable like the wave of ocean, which borrows its tint from the shadow or the day beam—blue when she reflected, almost black when called into animated play. Long eye-lashes, blacker than her hair, gave the appearance of great depth to her glance. Her nose, which united with her brow by an almost imperceptible curve was slightly expanded near the middle. Her Grecian mouth displayed the well cut lips, whose expression, impossible to depict, fluctuated between tenderness and severity, equally formed to breathe love or patriotism.

The projecting chin, divided by a deep dimple, gave to the lower part of her face a character of masculine resolution which contrasted with the perfectly feminine contour of her lovely face. Her cheeks had the freshness of youth and the firm oval of health. She blushed or turned pale very suddenly. Her skin had the wholesome and marbled whiteness of perfect healthiness. Her chest, wide and somewhat thin, offered a bust of sculpture scarcely undulated by the characteristic contour of her sex. Her arms were full of muscle; her hands long, and her fingers taper. Her attire, conformable to the humbleness of her fortune and the retirement in which she dwelt, was simplicity itself. She relied on nature, and disdained every artifice or whim of fashion in her dress. Those who saw her in her youth describe her as always attired in a gown of dark cloth, cut like a riding habit, with a hat of grey felt, turned up at the sides with black riband, round and like those worn by women of rank at that period. The tone of her voice—that living echo which bespeaks the whole soul in a vibration of the air—left a deep and tender impression in the ear of those whom she addressed; and they spoke still of that tone, ten years after they had heard it, as of strange and unforgotten music ineffaceably imprinted on the memory. There were in this scale of the soul notes so sonorous and deep, that they said to hear was even more than to see her, and that her voice formed a portion of her beauty.

This young girl was named Charlotte Corday d'Armont

Although of noble blood, she was born in a cottage called le Ronceray, in the village of Ligneries, not far from d'Argentan. Misfortune had ushered her into life, which she was destined to quit by the scaffold.

IV. Her father, François de Corday d'Armont, was one of those country gentlemen whose poverty made him almost on a level with the peasant. This nobility preserved nothing of its ancient elevation but a certain respect for the family name, and a vague hope of a return to fortune, which prevented him alike from lowering himself by his manner, or of raising himself by his labour. The land which such rural nobility cultivated in its small and inalienable domains nourished, without humiliating it by its indigence. Nobility and the soil seemed to be wedded in France, as aristocracy and the sea are wedded in Venice. M. de Corday united to this agricultural occupation a restlessness in politics, and literary tastes, then very common in this cultivated portion of the nobles of the population. He longed with all his soul for a coming revolution. He was wretched in his inaction and poverty. He had written some casual pamphlets against despotism and the law of primogeniture, and his productions were full of the feeling which was speedily to burst forth. He had a horror of superstition, the ardour of the newly springing philosophy, and the conviction of the necessity of a revolution; but either from lack of genius, restlessness of temperament, or the malevolence of fortune, which restrain the highest talents in oblivion, he could not make his way through events.

He pined in the obscurity of his petty fief of Ligneries, in the bosom of his yearly increasing family. Five children, — two sons and three daughters, of whom Charlotte was the second, —made him feel daily with more acuteness the stern and sad pressure of want. His wife, Jacqueline-Charlotte-Marie-de-Gonthier-des-Autiers, died, leaving her husband to her daughters, still young, but really bequeathing to her orphans that domestic tradition and daily inspiration which death carries off from children when it bereaves them of their mother.

Charlotte and her sisters lived on after this for some years at Ligneries, almost running wild, clothed in coarse cloth, like the young girls of Normandy, and, like them, working in the garden, making hay, gleaning, and gathering the apples on the small estate of their father. At length necessity compelled M. de Corday to separate from his daughters, who, by favour of their nobility and their indigence, entered a monastery at Caen, of which Madame Belzunce was abbess. This abbey, whose vast cloisters and chapel of Roman architecture were built in 1066, by Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, after having been deserted, degraded, and forgotten in its ruins, until 1730, was then magnificently restored; and at this day forms one of the finest hospitals in the kingdom, and one of the most splendid public buildings in the city of Caen.

V. Charlotte was then thirteen years of age. These convents were then really Christian abodes for women, who lived apart from the world, still hearing all its reports and sharing in all its movements. The monastic life, replete with pleasant employments and close friendships, for some time captivated the young girl. Her ardent soul and impassioned fancy threw her into that state of dreamy contemplation in which enthusiasts fancy they behold God, — a state which the careful watchfulness of a superior and the power of imitation so easily change in infancy into faith and devotional exercises. The iron disposition of Madame Roland herself would have warmed and softened in presence of this heavenly fire. Charlotte, more tender, yielded more easily. For some years she was a model of piety. She dreamed of ending her life — as yet hardly opened at its first page, and of burying herself in this living tomb, where, instead of death, she found repose, friendship, and happiness.

But the stronger were her feelings, the more rapidly did she penetrate and reach the extremity of her thoughts: she rapidly plumbed the depths of her childish faith, and contemplated beyond her domestic ideas others, fresh — luminous — sublime. She neither forsook God nor virtue, the two earliest passions of her soul, but she gave them other names — different shapes. Philosophy, which was then irradiating France with its lights, gained admittance, with the books then in vogue, through the gratings of nunneries. These were deeply studied in the seclusion of the cloister; and in opposition to monastic pettinesses, philosophy formed its most ardent adepts. The youth there, male and female, in the universal triumph of reason, saw their fetters broken, and adored their regained liberty.

Charlotte formed in the convent those affectionate predilections of infancy so like the relationships of the heart. Her friends were two young girls of noble houses, but of fortunes humble as her own — Mesdemoiselles de Faudoas and de Forbin. The abbess, Madame de Belzunce, and the assistant, Madame Doulcet de Pontécoulant, had distinguished Charlotte, and they admitted her into those somewhat mundane parties which custom permitted the abbesses to keep up with their relatives in the world even in the seclusion of their convents.

VI. At the period when monasteries were suppressed, Charlotte was nineteen years of age. The penury of her father's home had increased with time. Her two brothers in the king's service had emigrated; one of her sisters was dead, the other managed her father's poverty-stricken home at Argentan. Madame de Bretteville, the old aunt, received Charlotte into her house at Caen, though, like her family, she was poor, living in that obscurity and silence which hardly allowed the nearest neighbour to be aware of the existence and name of a poor widow. Her age and infirmities cast even a deeper gloom over her condition. Charlotte aided her in domestic duties, accompanying her aunt in the evenings to those meetings of the nobility which the fury of the people had not wholly destroyed, and where some remnants of the *ancien régime* were still tolerated in their attempts to console each other, and in their lamentations over the state of circumstances. Charlotte, respecting these regrets and superstitions of the past, never cast a word of reproach on them, but smiled to herself, whilst in her inmost soul she kept up the already kindled flame of different opinions—a flame which daily burnt more ardently.

Charlotte passed her days in the courtyard and garden, reading and musing. No one interfered or directed her in any way: her freedom, opinions, and studies were wholly unconstrained. The religious and political opinions of Madame de Bretteville were habits rather than convictions; and the republican sentiments of Charlotte's father had been more or less imbibed by every member of his family, inclining them all for the new ideas which had sprung up. Charlotte's age inclined her to the perusal of romances, which supplied visions ready drawn for unemployed minds. Her feelings led her to pursue works of philosophy, which transform the vague instincts of humanity into sublime theories of government; and historical productions, which convert theories into actions and ideas into men.

She found this two-fold desire of her imagination and heart satisfied in Jean Jacques Rousseau, the philosopher of love, and the poet of politics; in Raynal, a fanatic of humanity; in Plutarch, a personification of history, who paints more than he relates, and imparts life to the events and characters of his heroes. These three works were incessantly in her hands, whilst from time to time she read *Héloïse*, and works of that class. Yet, whilst her imagination was thus warmed, her mind lost none of its purity, nor her youth its chastity. Absorbed in the desire of loving and being loved, inspiring, and sometimes experiencing the first symptoms of love, her reserve, her dependence, and destitution always repressed the avowal of such feelings. Her love, thus restrained, changed not its nature but its ideal, and became a vague, yet sublime devotion to a dream of public happiness. The passion with which she would have been inspired for some one individual consumed her in her ardour for her country, and the desire of immolating herself to this had wholly possessed her, — was her love or her virtue; and however bloody was the sacrifice to be, she had resolved on its consummation.

She had reached that enthusiastic state of mind which is the suicide of happiness, not for the profit of glory or ambition, like Madame Roland, but for the sake of liberty and humanity, like Judith or Epicharis. She only awaited the occasion — it came, and she thought to seize it.

VII. It was at this moment that the Girondists were struggling with daring courage and prodigious eloquence against their enemies in the Convention. The Jacobins only desired to wrest the republic from the Gironde, in order to precipitate France into a bloody anarchy. The convulsive throes of liberty, the hateful tyranny of the mob of Paris, substituted for the legal sovereignty of the nation, represented by its deputies; arbitrary imprisonments, the assassinations of September, the conspiracy of the 10th of March, the insurrection of the 30th and 31st of May, the expulsion and proscription of the purer portion of the Assembly, their scaffold in perspective, where liberty would ascend with them, the probity of Roland, the youth of Fonfrède and Barbaroux, Isnard's cry of despair, Buzot's constancy, Pétion's integrity, from an idol become a victim, the martyrdom in the tribune of Lanjuinais, who only required that he might parallel Cicero's fate — that his tongue should be nailed to the rostrum; and finally, the eloquence of Vergniaud, that hope of good citizens, that remorse of froward ones, became suddenly mute, and leaving honest men to their discouragement, and the wicked to their infamy: in the place of these men, interesting or sublime, who appeared to defend in the breach the last ramparts of society, and the sacred hearth of every citizen, a Marat, the dregs and leprosy of the people, triumphing over the laws by sedition, crowned by impunity, carried into the tribune on the arms of the faubourgs, attaining the dictatorship of anarchy, spoliation, assassination, and threatening every species of independence, property, liberty, and life in the departments: all these convulsions, excesses, terrors, had deeply shaken the provinces of Normandy.

VIII. The presence in Calvados of the proscribed and fugitive deputies, appealing to liberty against oppression, and lighting up the hearths of the department in order to call up avengers for the country, had excited even to adoration the attachment of the city of Caen towards the Girondists, and execration against Marat, whose very name had become synonymous with crime.

What was desired in Normandy before the 10th of August was not so much the overthrow of the throne as an equalising constitution of the monarchy. The city of Rouen, capital of that province, was attached to the person of Louis XVI., and had offered him an asylum before his fall. The scaffold of that prince had saddened and humiliated the good citizens. The other cities of this part of France were rich, industrious, and agricultural. Peace and shipping were requisite to their prosperity, and a horror against the king's murderers, and a secret disposition to establish a *régime*, which should unite the assurances of a monarchy with the liberties of the republic prevailed amongst them. Thence their enthusiasm for these Girondists, men of the constitution of 1791; thence, also, the hope which clung to their restoration and their vengeance. All patriotism was thus attacked, every virtue was thus sensibly assailed, all hope of real liberty died with them.

Charlotte Corday felt all these blows directed against her country concentrate themselves in anguish, despair, and daring in her already deeply stricken heart. She saw the loss of France, saw the victims, and believed she discerned the tyrant. She swore an inward oath, to avenge the one, punish the other, and save all. She pondered for many days over the vague determination of her heart, without clearly resolving on what deed her country required at her hands, which link of crime it was most urgent to cut through. She considered things, men, circumstances, in order that her courage might not be fruitless, nor her blood spilled in vain.

IX. The Girondists, Buzot, Salles, Pétion, Valady, Gorsas, Kervélégan, Mollevault, Barbaroux, Louvet, Giroux, Bussy, Bergoing, Lesage (d'Eure-et-Loir), Meilhan, Henri Larivière, Duchâtel, had been for some time assembled at Caen, and occupied themselves with fomenting the general insurrection in the departments of the north, and combining it with the republican insurrection of Brittany, in recruiting battalions of volunteers, and sending them to the army of Puisaye and Wimpfen, which was to march on Paris, and in keeping up, in their localities, the fire of indignation in the departments which were to consume their enemies. By rising against the omnipotence of Paris, and the dictatorship of the Convention, the youth of the departments believed they were rising against Marat only.

Danton and Robespierre, less conspicuous in the last efforts of the people against the Girondists, had, in the eyes of the insurgents, neither importance nor authority over the people, nor the sanguinary delirium of Marat. They left the names of these two great partisans of the Montagne in the shade, in order not to damage the esteem in which these two popular and important personages were held by the Jacobins of the departments. The multitude was deceived, and saw tyranny and freedom in one man's hands only. Charlotte, amongst the rest, was so mistaken. The shadow of Marat darkened all the republic in her eyes.

X. The Girondists, whom the city of Caen had taken under its care, all lived together in the old palace of that city, whither the seat of the federalist government was removed, together with the insurrectional committee; and here were held assemblies of the people, where the citizens, and even the women, flocked in crowds in order to see and hear these first victims of anarchy, these last avengers of liberty. The names so long prevalent of Pétion, Buzot, Louvet, Barbaroux, pleaded more powerfully than their orations to the imaginations of Calvados. The vicissitudes of revolutions softened the spectators, and made them proud of speedily avenging such illustrious guests. They were overcome by the energetic accents of these persons, and pointed as they passed to Pétion, the king of Paris, to Barbaroux, hero of Marseilles, whose youth and beauty adorned eloquence, courage, and misfortunes; and they went about appealing to arms, and exciting sons, husbands, brothers to enlist in their battalions. Charlotte Corday, surmounting the prejudices of her rank, and the timidity of her sex and age, ventured frequently to be present with some friends at these meetings, and was remarked for the silent enthusiasm which increased her feminine beauty, and which was only betrayed by her tears.

XI. Louvet addressed inflammatory proclamations to the cities of the south: —

"The forces of the department which are on their road to Paris," said he, "do not seek enemies to combat them: they go to fraternise with the Parisians; they go to support the tottering statue of liberty. Citizens! you who may see these friendly phalanxes pass through your roads, your towns, and your villages, — fraternise with them. Do not suffer bloodthirsty monsters to establish themselves amongst you to arrest them on their march." These words produced thousands of volunteers. More than six thousand were already assembled in the town of Caen. On Sunday, the 7th of July, they were passed in review by the Girondist deputies and the authorities of Calvados, with all the requisite preparations to electrify their courage. This spontaneous assemblage rising, arms in hand, to go and die in avenging liberty for the insults of anarchy, recalled the patriotic insurrection of 1792; drawing to the frontiers all who desired to live no longer, if the country no longer existed. Charlotte Corday was present in a balcony at this enrolment and departure. The enthusiasm of these young citizens, abandoning their firesides to go and protect the violated hearth of the national representation, and brave cannon-balls or the guillotine, responded to her own. She even found it too cold. She felt indignant at the small number of enrolments which this review had added to the regiments and battalions of Wimpfen. There were not in fact on this day more than a score. This enthusiasm, it was said, was endeared to her by the mysterious but pure feeling which one of these volunteers, who thus tore themselves from their families, their love, and it might be from life, bore towards her. Charlotte Corday had not been able to remain insensible to this concealed adoration, but she immolated this attachment to one more sublime.

This young man was named Franquelin. He adored in silence the young female republican. He carried on a correspondence with her full of reserve and respect. She answered with the sad and tender reserve of a young girl who had no dowry but misfortune to bestow. She had given her portrait to the young volunteer, and permitted him to love her, at least through her image.

M. de Franquelin, borne away by the general impulse, and sure of obtaining a glance and approbation by arming himself in the cause of liberty, had enrolled himself in the battalion of Caen. Charlotte could not help trembling and growing pale on seeing this battalion defile to depart. Tears fell from her eyes. Pétion, who passed under the balcony, and who knew Charlotte, was astonished at this weakness, and thus addressed her: "Would you then be happy," said he to her, "if they did not depart?" The young maiden blushed, made no reply, and withdrew. Pétion had not comprehended this distress: the future revealed it to him. Young Franquelin, after the trial and execution of Charlotte Corday, death-stricken himself by the counter-blow of the axe which had decapitated her whom he adored, retired to a village in Normandy. There, alone with his mother, he lingered for some months, and died, requesting that the portrait and the letters of Charlotte Corday might be buried with him — that image and that secret repose in that coffin.

XII. After the departure of the volunteers, Charlotte had but one thought: to anticipate their arrival in Paris, to spare their generous lives, and render patriotism useless, in delivering France from tyranny before them. This attachment, endured rather than tested, was one of the sorrows of her devotion, but was not the cause of it.

The true cause was her patriotism. A presentiment of terror already spread over France at this moment. The scaffold was erected in Paris. They spoke of speedily carrying it through all the republic. The power of La Montagne and Marat, if it triumphed, could only defend itself by the hand of the executioner. The monster, it was said, had already written the lists of proscription, and counted the number of heads which were necessary for his suspicions and his vengeance. Two thousand five hundred victims were marked out in Lyons, three thousand at Marseilles, twenty-eight thousand at Paris, and three hundred thousand in Brittany and Calvados. The name of Marat caused a shudder like the mention of death. To check such an effusion of blood, Charlotte desired to shed her own. The more she broke her ties on earth, the more agreeable would she be as the voluntary victim to the liberty which she desired to appease.

Such was the secret disposition of her mind, but Charlotte desired to see clearly before she struck the blow.

XIII. She could not better enlighten herself upon the state of Paris, upon men and matters, than through the Girondists, the parties interested in this cause. She wished to sound them without disclosing herself to them. She respected them sufficiently not to reveal a project which they might have possibly regarded as a crime, or prevented as a generous but rash act. She had the constancy to conceal from her friends the thought of sacrificing herself for their safety. She presented herself under specious pretexts at the Hôtel of Intendance, where the citizens who had business with them could approach the deputies. She saw Buzot, Pétion, and Louvet. She discoursed twice with Barbaroux. The conversation of a young, beautiful, and enthusiastic maiden with the youngest and the handsomest of the Girondists, under the guise of politics, was calculated to give rise to calumny, or at least to excite the smile of incredulity upon some lips. It was so at the first moment. Louvet, who afterwards wrote a hymn to the purity and glory of the young heroine, believed at first in one of those vulgar seductions of the senses with which he had embellished his notorious romance. Buzot, totally occupied with another image, hardly cast a glance upon Charlotte. Pétion, on crossing the public hall of the Intendance, where Charlotte awaited Barbaroux, kindly rallied her on her assiduity, and making allusion to the contrast between such a step and her birth, "Behold then," said he, "the beautiful aristocrat, who comes to see the republicans!" The young girl comprehended the smile, and the insinuation so wounding to her purity. She blushed, and, vexed afterwards at having done so, answered in a serious yet gentle tone, "Citizen Pétion, you judge me today without knowing me; one day you will know who I am."

XIV. In these audiences which she obtained of Barbaroux, and which she designedly prolonged, to feed herself, from his discourses, with the republicanism, the enthusiasm, and the projects of La Gironde, she assumed the humble part of a suppliant; she requested from the young Marseillais a letter of introduction from one of his colleagues in the Convention, which would introduce her to the minister of the interior.

She had, she said, claims to present to the government in favour of Mademoiselle de Forbin, her friend in infancy. Mademoiselle de Forbin had been induced to emigrate by her relatives, and was suffering poverty in Switzerland.

Barbaroux gave her a letter for Duperret, one of the seventy-three deputies of the Girondist party who were overlooked in the first proscription.

This letter of Barbaroux's, which afterwards led Duperret to the scaffold, did not contain a single word which could be imputed as criminal to the deputy who received it. Barbaroux confined himself to recommending a young female of Caen to the consideration and protection of Duperret. He announced to him a publication of their mutual friend, Salles, upon the constitution. Furnished with this letter and a passport which she had taken out some days before, for Argentan, Charlotte went to pay her farewell acknowledgments to Barbaroux. The sound of her voice struck Barbaroux with a presentiment which he could not then comprehend. "If we had known her design," said he at a later period, "and if we had been capable of a crime by such a hand, it was not Marat whom we should have pointed out for her vengeance."

The gaiety which Charlotte had always mingled with the gravity of her patriotic conversations vanished from her countenance on quitting for ever the dwelling of the Girondists. The last struggle between the thought and its execution was going on in her mind. She concealed this interior combat by careful and well-managed dissimulation. The gravity of her countenance alone, and some tears, ill concealed from the eyes of her relatives, revealed the voluntary agony of her self-immolation. Interrogated by her aunt: "I weep," said she, "over the misfortunes of my country, over those of my relatives, and over yours. Whilst Marat lives, no one can be sure of a day's existence."

Madame de Bretteville remembered afterwards, that on entering Charlotte's chamber to awaken her, she found upon her bed an old Bible open at the Book of Judith, and in which she had read this verse, underlined with a pencil: "Judith went forth from the city, adorned with a marvellous beauty, which the Lord had bestowed on her to deliver Israel."

On the same day, Charlotte having gone out to make her preparations for departure, she met in the street some citizens who were playing at cards before their door. "You play," said she, with an accent of bitter irony, "and the country is dying!"

Her manner and speech testified the impatience and precipitation of a departure. She set out at length on the 7th July for Argentan. There she took her last adieu of her father and sister. She told them that she went to seek a refuge and existence in England against the Revolution and misery, and that she desired to receive the paternal benediction previous to this long separation. Her father approved of this decision.

XV. On embracing her father and sister, she wept more over the past than for the future. She returned on the same day to Caen. She there deceived the tenderness of her aunt by the same ruse which had deceived her father. She told her that she should soon set out for England, where some emigrant friends had prepared her an asylum and a lot which she could not hope for in her own country. This pretext concealed the sorrow of her adieux, and the various arrangements for her departure. She had privately arranged it for the morrow, the 9th of July, by the Paris diligence. Charlotte filled up these last hours in gratitude, attention, and tenderness towards that aunt to whom she owed such long and kind hospitality, and she provided through one of her friends for the old servant who had taken care of her in her youth. She ordered and paid in advance, at the tradespeople's shops in Caen, for some little presents of dresses and embroidery destined to be worn after her departure, by some youthful companions of her early days. She distributed her favourite books amongst the young persons of her acquaintance, and reserved none for herself but a volume of Plutarch, as if she did not desire to separate herself, in the crisis of her life, from the society of those great men with whom she had lived and wished to die. Finally, on the 9th of July, very early in the morning, she took under her arm a small bundle of the most requisite articles of apparel, embraced her aunt, and told her she was going to sketch the haymakers in the neighbouring meadows. With a sheet of drawing-paper in her hand, she went out to return no more. At the foot of the staircase she met the child of a poor labourer, named Robert, who lodged in the house, in the street. The child was accustomed to play in the court. She sometimes gave him little toys. "Here! Robert," said she to him, giving him the drawing-paper, which she no longer required to keep her in countenance: "that is for you; be a good boy, and kiss me; you will never see me again." And she embraced the child, leaving a tear upon his cheek. That was the last tear on the threshold of the house of her youth. She had nothing left to give but her blood.

XVI. The freedom and harmlessness of her conversation in the carriage which conveyed her towards Paris did not inspire her travelling companions with any other sentiment than that of admiration, good-will, and that natural curiosity which attaches itself to the name and fate of an unknown girl of dazzling youth and beauty. She continued to play during the first day with a little girl, whom chance had placed beside her in the carriage. Whether it were that her love for children overcame her pre-occupation of thought, or that she had already laid aside the burden of her trouble, and desired to enjoy these last hours of sport with innocence and with life.

The other travellers were Montagnards, who fled from the suspicion of federalism to Paris, and were profuse in imprecations against the Girondists, and in adoration for Marat. Attracted by the graces of the young girl, they strove to draw from her her name, the object of her journey, and her address in Paris. Her loneliness at that age encouraged them to familiarities, which she repelled by the modesty of her manners, and the evasive brevity of her answers, which she was enabled to terminate by feigning sleep. A young man, who was more reserved, seduced by so much modesty and such charms, ventured to declare to her his respectful admiration. He implored her to authorise him to ask her hand of her relations. She turned this sudden love into kind raillery and mirth. She promised the young man to let him know her name and her disposition in regard to himself at a later period. She charmed her fellow travellers to the end of the journey, by that delightful conduct from which all regretted to separate themselves.

XVII. She entered Paris on Thursday, 11th of July, at noon. She was conducted to an hotel which had been indicated to her at Caen, in the Rue des Vieux Augustins, No. 17., the Hôtel de la Providence. She retired to rest at five in the evening, and slept profoundly until the next day. Without a confidant, and without a witness, during those long hours of solitude and agitation, in a public house and amidst the noise of this capital whose magnitude and tumult absorb the ideas and trouble the senses, no one knows what passed in that mind, upon her awakening and recollecting the resolve which summoned her to execution. Who can measure the force of her thought, and the resistance of nature? The thought prevailed.

XVIII. She arose, dressed herself in a simple but respectable gown, and went to Duperret's. The friend of Barbaroux was at the Convention. His daughters, in the absence of their father, received from the young stranger Barbaroux's letter of introduction. Duperret would not be home until the evening.

Charlotte returned and passed the entire day in her chamber in reading, reflection, and in prayer. At six o'clock she returned again to Duperret's. The deputy was at table at supper with his family and friends. He rose and received her in his drawing-room, without a witness. Charlotte explained to him the service she expected from his courtesy, and begged him to conduct her to the minister of the interior, Garat, and to aid by his presence and credit the suit she had to urge. This request was but a pretext on her part to bring her into contact with one of these Girondists for whose cause she was about to sacrifice herself, and to derive from her discourse with him full information and proper indications, the better to assure her steps and her hand.

Duperret, pressed by time and recalled by his guests, told her he could not conduct her on that day to Garat's, but that he would call upon her at her residence on the following morning to accompany her to the offices. She left her name and address with Duperret, and made some steps as if about to withdraw, but as if overcome by the interest with which the honest countenance of this good man and the youth of his daughters had inspired her, "Permit me to advise you, Citizen Duperret:" said she, in a voice full of mystery and warning; "quit the Convention; you can do no more good there; go to Caen, and rejoin your colleagues and brothers." "My post is at Paris," replied the representative; "I will not leave it." "You are in error," replied Charlotte, with a significative and almost suppliant appeal. "Believe me," she added in a lower and more rapid voice; "fly, fly, before to-morrow night!" and she departed without awaiting an answer.

XIX. These words, the sense of which was only known to the stranger, were interpreted by Duperret as a simple allusion to the urgency of the perils which menaced those of his opinion in Paris. He went and reseated himself with his friends. He told them that a young female, with whom he had just discoursed, had, in her attitude and speech, something strange and mysterious, with which he was struck, and which commanded from him reserve and circumspection.

In the evening a decree of the Convention ordered seals to be put on the furniture of the deputies suspected of attachment to the twenty-two. Duperret was one of the number. He went, however, on the following day, the 12th, very early in the morning, to Charlotte at her lodging, and conducted her to Garat. Garat did not receive them. The minister could not grant an audience before eight o'clock in the evening. This *contre-temps* appeared to discourage Duperret. He represented to the young girl, that his position as one suspected, and the measures taken against him on that very night, rendered his patronage henceforth more prejudicial than useful to his clients; that besides, she was not furnished with a power from Mademoiselle de Forbin to act in her name, and that in default of this formality his proceedings would be futile.

The stranger remonstrated but little, as a person who had no more need of the pretext with which she had coloured her first steps, and who contented herself with the slightest argument to abandon her idea. Duperret left her at the door of the Hôtel de la Providence. She pretended to enter it. She went out immediately, and inquired, street by street, the way to the Palais Royal.

She entered the gardens, not as a stranger who desired to satisfy her curiosity by the contemplation of monuments and public gardens, but as a traveller who had only one object in the city, and who did not desire to lose a step or a day. She sought with her eyes, under the galleries, for the shop of a cutler. She entered one; selected a poignard-knife with an ebony haft, paid three francs for it, concealed it under her handkerchief, and with slow steps returned to the garden, where she seated herself for a moment upon one of the stone benches abutting on the arcades.

She desired to make of this murder a solemn immolation, which should strike terror into the minds of the imitators of the tyrant. Her first idea had been to approach Marat, accost him, and sacrifice him in the Champ-de-Mars, at the great ceremony of the federation which was to take place on the 14th of July in commemoration of the triumph of liberty. The adjournment of this ceremony until the republic should suppress the Vendeans and the rebels, deprived her of her theatre and her victim. Her second idea was to strike Marat at the summit of the Mountain, in the very midst of the Convention, beneath the eyes of his adorers and accomplices. Her hope in this case was that she herself should be immolated the next moment, and torn in pieces by the people, leaving no other trace or recollection than of two dead bodies and tyranny destroyed in its own blood. To bury her name in oblivion, and seek no recompence but in the act itself, asking her shame or renown but from her own conscience, God, and the good she should effect — such was to the last the single ambition of her mind. Shame! she would not have it for her family's sake. Renown! she desired not for herself. Glory! seemed to her a salary too commonplace, and unworthy of the disinterestedness of her deed, and but calculated to deteriorate her virtue. However, the conversations she had had since her arrival in Paris with Duperret and others informed her that Marat would not again appear in the Convention. Thus it was necessary to find the victim elsewhere, and to obtain access, it was necessary to deceive him.

XX. This she resolved on; yet was the dissimulation which was so foreign to the natural loyalty of her nature, which changed the dagger into a snare, courage into stratagem, and immolation into assassination, — the first remorse of her conscience, and her first punishment. Charlotte decided on striking the blow, but the means she was compelled to adopt cost her more than the deed itself. This she herself confessed. Conscience is just in the presence of posterity.

She returned to her chamber, and wrote to Marat a billet, which she sent to the door of the friend of the people. "I have just arrived from Caen," she wrote. "Your love of country makes me presume that you will have pleasure in hearing of the unfortunate events of that portion of the republic. I shall present myself at your abode about one o'clock; have the goodness to receive me, and grant me a moment's conversation. I will put you in a position to be of great service to France."

Charlotte, relying on the effect of this note, went at the appointed hour to Marat's door, but could not obtain access to him. She then left with the portress a second note, more pressing and insidious than the former.

"I wrote to you this morning, Marat," she said; "did you have my letter? I cannot believe it, as they refuse me admittance to you. I hope that to-morrow you will grant me the interview I request. I repeat that I am just arrived from Caen, and have secrets to disclose to you most important for the safety of the republic. Besides, I am persecuted for the cause of liberty; I am unhappy, and that I am so should give me a claim on your patriotism."

XXI. Without awaiting his reply, Charlotte left her chamber at seven o'clock P. M., clad with more than usual care in order, by a more studied appearance, to attract the persons about Marat. Her white gown was covered over the shoulders by a silk scarf, which, falling over her bosom, fastened behind. Her hair was confined by a Normandy cap, the long lace of which played against her cheeks. A wide green silk riband was bound around her brows, and fastened her cap. Her hair fell loose down her back. No paleness of complexion, no wildness of gaze, no tremulousness of voice, revealed her deadly purpose. With this attractive aspect she knocked at Marat's door.

XXII. Marat inhabited the first floor of a dilapidated house in the Rue des Cordeliers, now Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine, No. 20. His apartment consisted of an antechamber and a writing-room, looking out on a narrow courtyard, a small room containing his bath, a sleeping-room and dining-room looking on to the street. It was very meanly furnished. Numerous publications of Marat's were piled on the floor, — the newspapers of the day, still damp from the press, were scattered about on the chairs and tables, printers' lads coming in and going out incessantly, women employed in folding and addressing pamphlets and journals, the worn steps of the staircase, the ill-swept passages, — all attested the movement and disorder which surround a man much occupied, and the perpetual crowd of persons in the house of a journalist and leader of the people.

This abode displayed, as it were, the pride of poverty. It appeared as though its master, then all-powerful over the nation, was desirous of saying to his visitors when they contemplated his squalidness and his labour, "Look at the friend and model of the people! he has not cast off its abode, manners, or dress."

This misery, though a display, was yet real. Marat's domestic arrangements were those of an humble artisan. A female, who controlled his house affairs, was originally named Catherine Evrard, but was called Albertine Marat from the time when the friend of the people had given her his name, taking her for his wife *one day in fine weather, in the face of open sunshine*, after the example of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. One servant aided this woman in her household duties. A messenger, named Laurent Basse, did the out-door work, and when he had leisure, employed himself in the antechamber in packing up parcels of the papers and bills for the *friend of the people.*

The incessant activity of the writer had not relaxed in consequence of the lingering disease which was consuming him. The inflammatory action of his blood seemed to light up his mind. Now in his bed, now in his bath, he was perpetually writing, apostrophising, inveighing against his enemies, whilst exciting the Convention and the Cordeliers. Offended at the silence of the Assembly on the reception of his messages, he had recently addressed to it another letter, in which he threatened the Convention that he would be carried in his dying condition to the tribune, that he might shame the representatives with their cowardice, and dictate to them fresh murders. He left no repose either to himself or to others. Full of the presentiment of death, he only seemed to fear that his last hour, coming on too suddenly, would not leave him time to immolate sufficient criminals. More anxious to kill than to live, he hastened to send before him as many victims as possible, as so many hostages given by the knife to the completed revolution, which he desired to leave free from all enemies after his death. The terror which issued from Marat's house returned thither under another form — the unending dread of assassination. His companion and his intimate associates believed that they saw as many daggers raised against him as he raised over the heads of three hundred thousand citizens. Access to his residence was forbidden, as it would be to the palace of tyranny. None were admitted to his presence but assured friends or denouncers strongly recommended, and who had submitted to interrogatories and severe examinations.

XXIII. Charlotte was not aware of these obstacles, although she apprehended them. She alighted from the coach on the opposite side of the street, in front of Marat's residence. The day was on the wane, particularly in the quarter darkened by lofty houses and narrow streets. The portress at first refused to allow the young unknown to penetrate into the courtyard. She insisted, however, and ascended several stairs, regardless of the voice of the *concierge*. At these sounds, Marat's mistress half-opened the door, and refused to allow a female whom she did not know to enter. The confused sound of the altercation between these women, one of whom entreated that she might be allowed to speak to *the friend of the people*, whilst the other endeavoured to close the door in her face, reached Marat's ears, who comprehended, by the few indistinct words that reached him, that the visitor was the stranger from whom he had received two notes during the day. In a loud and imperative voice he ordered that she should be admitted.

Albertine, either from jealousy or distrust, obeyed with much ill-will and grumbling. She showed the young girl into the small closet where Marat was, and left, as she quitted her, the door half open, that she might hear the lowest whisper or the smallest movement of the sick man.

The room was faintly lighted. Marat was in his bath, yet in this forced repose of his body, he allowed his mind no leisure. A plank, roughly planed, laid across the bath, was covered with papers, open letters, and half-written articles for his publication. He held in his right hand the pen which the arrival of the unknown female had suspended on its page. This was a letter to the Convention, to demand of it the judgment and proscription of the last Bourbons tolerated in France. Beside the bath, on a large block of oak, was a leaden inkstand, of the meanest fabric — the foul source whence, for three years, had flowed so many delirious outpourings, so many denunciations, so much blood. Marat, covered in his bath with a cloth filthy with dirt and spotted with ink, had only his head, shoulders, the upper part of his chest, and his right arm out of the water. There was nothing in the features of this man to affect a woman's eye with tenderness, or give pause to a meditated blow. His matted hair, wrapped in a dirty handkerchief, with receding forehead, protruding eyes, prominent cheek-bones, vast and sneering mouth, hairy chest, shrivelled limbs, and livid skin —such was Marat.

XXIV. Charlotte took care not to look him in the face, for fear her countenance might betray the horror she felt at his sight. With downcast eyes, and her arms hanging motionless by her side, she stood close to the bath, awaiting until Marat should inquire as to the state of Normandy. She replied with brevity, giving to her replies the sense and tone likely to pacify the demagogue's wishes. He then asked the name of the deputies who had taken refuge at Caen. She gave them to him, and he wrote them down, and when he had concluded, said, in the voice of a man sure of his vengeance, "Well, before they are a week older, they shall have the guillotine!"

At these words, as if Charlotte's mind had awaited a last offence before it could resolve on striking the blow, she drew the knife from her bosom, and, with superhuman force, plunged it to the hilt in Marat's heart. She then drew the bloody weapon from the body of the victim, and let it fall at her feet. "Help, my dear,—help!" cried Marat, and then expired.

At this cry, Albertine, the maid servant, and Laurent Basse rushed into the apartment, and caught Marat's sinking head in their arms. Charlotte, motionless, and as if petrified at her crime, was standing behind the window curtain. The transparent material allowed her form to be easily distinguished. Laurent, taking up a chair, struck her a clumsy blow on the head, which knocked her to the floor, where Marat's mistress trampled her under foot in her rage. At the noise that ensued, and the cries of the two women, the inhabitants of the house hastened thither, neighbours and persons passing in the streets ascended the staircase and filled the room, the court-yard, and very speedily the whole quarter, demanding, with fierce exclamations that they would throw the assassin out to them, that they might avenge the dead — yet still warm — body of the people's idol. Soldiers and national guards entered, and order was, in some measure, re-established. Surgeons arrived, and endeavoured to stanch the wound. The reddened water gave to the sanguinary democrat the appearance of having died in a bath of blood. It was a dead corpse that they lifted into the bed.

XXV. Charlotte had risen from the floor without any assistance. Two soldiers held her with her arms crossed, as if in handcuffs, waiting until cords were brought to confine them. The file of bayonets which surrounded her could scarcely keep back the crowd which sought to rend her in pieces. Gesticulations, clenched fists, sticks, and brandished swords menaced her with a thousand deaths. Marat's concubine, escaping from the females who were consoling her, by turns uttered imprecations against Charlotte, and then burst into tears, or fainted. A fanatic Cordelier, named Langlois, a staymaker in the Rue Dauphine, had picked up the blood-stained knife, and made a funereal harangue over the victim. He interrupted his lamentations and eulogiums with revengeful gestures, in which he seemed to be perpetually thrusting the knife into the assassin's heart. Charlotte, who had made up her mind to any death that should follow, was, for a moment, fixed and petrified by this movement, these gestures, the hands and arms agitated so near to her, but was only affected by the piercing cries of Marat's mistress. Her countenance appeared to express towards this woman astonishment at not having thought that such a man could be loved, and regret at having been forced to pierce two hearts in order to reach one. Except the feeling of pity which the reproaches of Albertine for a moment impressed on her lips, no change was perceptible either in her features or complexion. Only, at the invectives of the orator, and the groans of the people at the loss of their idol, the bitter smile of contempt was visible on her features. "Poor people," she said, "you desire my death, whilst you owe me an altar for having freed you from a monster. Cast me to that infuriate mob," she said, afterwards, to the soldiery; "as they regret him, they are worthy to be my executioners." This remark, as a defiance to the fanaticism of the multitude, excited furious imprecations and fierce gesticulations. Guillard, the commissary of the section of the Théâtre Français, entered, escorted by a reinforcement of bayonets. He drew up the *procès verbal* of the murder, and had Charlotte conducted into Marat's dining room, to commence the interrogatory, where he wrote down her replies, which she gave calmly, clearly, and seriously, with a firm and resolute tone, in which the proud satisfaction at the act she had committed was alone perceptible. She made her confession as though it were praiseworthy. The report of the death of the "People's Friend" was spread abroad with the rapidity of an electric shock, by men running to and fro, full of excitement. All Paris was struck with stupor at the hearing of this deed. It seemed as though the republic was thunderstruck, and that dire events must spring from Marat's murder. Pale and trembling, several deputies entered the Convention, interrupting the business, and giving the first reports of the event. All refused to believe it, as they would refuse to give credit to a sacrilege. The commandant-general of the national guard, Henriot, came in, and confirmed the news. "Yes," he said, "tremble, all of you. Marat has been assassinated by a young girl who rejoices at the blow she has struck. Look carefully after your own lives; the same peril threatens all. Mistrust green ribands, and let us swear to avenge the death of this great man!"

XXVI. The deputies Maure, Chabot, Drouet, and Legendre, members of the committees of government, left the Chamber immediately and went to the spot. There they found the crowd increasing every moment, whilst Charlotte was replying to the interrogatories. They were overcome with surprise, at the sight of her youth and beauty, and at the calmness and firmness of her replies. Never had crime before presented such features to the eyes of men. She appeared so to alter it in their eyes that they felt a sympathy for her even in the very presence of her victim.

The *procès verbal* having finished, the deputies ordered that Charlotte should be conveyed to the Abbaye, the nearest prison. She entered the same hackney coach that had conveyed her thither. The Rue des Cordeliers was thronged with people, whose angry voices, frequently bursting out into vociferations and excess of rage, breathed vengeance, and made the transit difficult. Detachments of fusileers came up; the scarves of the commissaries, and the respect felt for the members of the Convention, kept back the mob, and cleared a way. At the moment when Charlotte, with her hands bound with cords, and supported by two national guards, crossed the threshold of the house to step into the coach, the people closed round the wheels with such gesticulations and groans that she felt as though her limbs were torn piecemeal by thousands of hands, and fainted. Returning to herself, she regretted that she still survived, yet she, with deep emotion, thanked those who had protected her from the brutalities of the crowd.

XXVII. Chabot, Drouet, and Legendre followed her to the Abbaye, where she underwent a second examination, which lasted until very late. Legendre, proud of his revolutionary importance, and anxious to be thought also worthy to be a martyr to his patriotism, believed or feigned to believe that he recognised in Charlotte a young girl who had come to him on the previous evening in the dress of a nun, and whom he had sent away. "Citizen Legendre is mistaken," said Charlotte, with a smile, which disconcerted the deputy's pride. "I never before saw him. I do not esteem the life or death of such a man important to the safety of the republic."

She was searched, and in her pockets were found only the key of her trunk, her silver thimble, some implements of needle-work, a ball of cotton, two hundred francs in assignats and money, a gold watch, made at Caen, and her passport.

Beneath her neckerchief she still concealed the sheath of the knife with which she had stabbed Marat. "Do you recognise this knife?" she was asked. "Yes." "What led you to this crime?" "I saw," she replied, "civil war ready to rend France to atoms: persuaded that Marat was the principal cause of the perils and calamities of the land, I have sacrificed my life for his to save my country." "Mention the persons who urged you to this detestable crime, which you could not have conceived of yourself." "No one knew my intention. I deceived my aunt, with whom I lived, as to the object of my journey. I deceived my father similarly. Few persons visit my relations, and no one could have had the slightest suspicion of my idea." "Did you not quit the city of Caen with the decided resolution of assassinating Marat?" "That was my sole motive in quitting that city." "Where did you procure the weapon? What persons have you seen in Paris? What have you done since Thursday, the day of your arrival?"

To these questions she replied with the utmost sincerity, detailing every particular as to her arrival at Paris, and what she had done since. "Did you not attempt to escape after the murder?" "I should have gone out at the door if I had not been prevented." "Are you a single woman?" "I am." "Have you never had a lover?" "Never."

XXVIII. These answers, alternate, precise, proud, and disdainful, made the hearers reflect frequently on the power of the fanaticism which employed and strengthened so feeble a hand. They hoped to discover an instigator beneath this candour and beauty, and they found nought, save inspiration and intrepidity.

At the end of the examination, Chabot, disappointed at the result, devoured, with his eyes, the hair, the features, the whole person of the young girl. He fancied he perceived a folded paper pinned to the bosom of her dress, and extended his hand to take it. Charlotte had forgotten this paper, which contained an address to the French, drawn up by herself, and calling on them to punish tyrants and restore concord. She saw in the gesture and look of Chabot an insult to her modesty; she was unable to put out her hands which were bound, but the horror and indignation she felt caused her to make so sudden and convulsive a spring backwards, that the string of her dress burst, and exposed her bosom. Quick as thought she stooped, and bent herself almost double to conceal her nudity from her judges. It was too late, and her chastity had to blush at the looks of man. Patriotism had not rendered these men cynical or insensible, and they appeared to suffer as much as Charlotte at this involuntary torture of her innocence. She entreated them to untie her hands, with which they complied, and Charlotte, turning round to the wall, arranged her dress. Advantage was taken of her hands being free to make her sign her replies. The cords had left blue marks on her arms, and when the guards were preparing to again bind her, she entreated to be allowed to put on her gloves, in order to save her unnecessary torture. The accent and gesture of the poor girl were so touching that Harmand turned aside to conceal his tears.

The following are the principal textual passages of this address to the French, which has been hitherto lost to history, and which has been communicated to us since the commencement of the publication of this work by the present possessor, M. Paillet. It is written in the hand of Charlotte Corday, in large bold characters, as though destined to be legible at some distance. The paper is folded in eight, and is pierced by the pin that fastened it to Charlotte's dress.

### "*Address to Frenchmen friendly to the Laws and Peace.*

"How long, O unhappy Frenchmen! will you delight in trouble and division? Too long have the factious and villains substituted the interests of their ambition in the place of the general interest. Why, victims of their fury, should you destroy yourselves to establish the tyranny they desire on the ruins of France? Factions break out on every side; the Montagne triumphs by crime and oppression; a few monsters, bathed in our blood, lead these detestable plots. We are labouring at our own destruction with more zeal and energy than we ever employed in the conquest of liberty. O Frenchmen! — but a brief space, and nothing will remain but the recollection of your existence.

"Already the departments are indignantly marching on Paris. Already the fire of discord and civil war consumes the half of this vast empire; there is but one means of extinguishing it, but it must be promptly employed. Already that vilest of wretches, Marat, whose very name presents the image of every crime, by falling beneath an avenging steel, shakes the Montagne, and alarms Danton, Robespierre, and the other brigands, seated on this bloody throne, surrounded by the thunders which the avenging gods doubtless only suspend, in order to render their fall more terrible, and to deter all those who would seek to build their fortunes on the ruins of a deceived people.

"Frenchmen, you know your enemies. — Rise — march! Let the destruction of the Montagne leave nothing but brothers and friends. I know not if Heaven reserves for us a republican government, but a Montagnard can be given to us only in the excess of divine vengeance. O France! thy repose depends upon the execution of the laws. I do not infringe them by killing Marat. Condemned by the universe, he is beyond the pale of the law. What tribunal will condemn me? If I am guilty, so was Alcides when he destroyed the monsters.

"O my country! thy misfortunes rend my heart. I can only offer thee my life; and I thank Heaven that I am at liberty to dispose of it. No one will be a loser by my death. I will not imitate Paris (the murderer of Lepelletier de Saint Fargeau) by killing myself. I desire that my last sigh may be useful to my fellow citizens — that my head, borne through Paris, may serve as a rallying point for all the friends of the laws; that the tottering Montagne should behold its destruction, written in my blood; that I may be their last victim, and that the universe may declare that I have merited well at the hands of humanity. And I declare that, if my conduct were viewed in another light, I should care but little.

> " 'Qu'à l'univers surpris cette grande action
> Soit un objet d'horreur, ou d'admiration,
> Mon esprit, peu jaloux de vivre en la mémoire,
> Ne considère point le reproche ou la gloire:
> Toujours independant et toujours citoyen,
> Mon devoir me suffit, tout le reste n'est rien.
> Allez, ne songez plus, qu'à sortir de l'esclavage!' "

" My parents and friends should not be molested. No one was acquainted with my plans. I join my baptismal register to this address, to show of what the weakest hand is capable, when aided by the most entire devotion. If I do not succeed in my enterprise, Frenchmen, I have shown you the way. You know your enemies. Arise — march! Strike them!"

On reading these verses written by the hand of the granddaughter of Corneille, we are at first led to believe that they are by her ancestor, and that she thus invoked the Roman patriotism of the great tragic author of her race. But this is not the case: they are in Voltaire's tragedy of "The Death of Cæsar."

The authenticity of this address is attested by a letter of Fouquier Tinville. This letter of the public accuser is directed to the Committee of General Safety of the Convention. We subjoin it: "Citizens, I forward to you the report of the examination of Charlotte Corday, and the two letters written by her in confinement, one of which is addressed to Barbaroux. These letters are circulated in so mutilated a form that it will, perhaps, be necessary to print them in their present state; and if, citizens, after having read them, you think there is no obstacle to printing them, you will oblige me by informing me.

"I would observe, that I have just learned that this female assassin was the friend of Belzunce, a colonel, who was killed at Caen in an insurrection, and that since this period she has displayed an implacable hatred towards Marat; and that this hatred appears to have been re-kindled at the moment when Marat denounced Biron, the relation of Belzunce, and Barbaroux appears to have availed himself of the criminal feelings of this girl against Marat, to induce her to commit this horrible murder.

"FOUQUIER TINVILLE."

Charlotte Corday was placed in a cell and watched, even during the night, by two *gens d'armes*, spite of her repeated protestations against this profanation of her sex. The Committee of General Safety hastened her trial and sentence. She could hear in her cell the voices of the criers who hawked about the streets the account of the murder, and the shouts of the crowd, demanding the death of the assassin. Charlotte did not deem this voice of the people that of posterity; and through the horror she foresaw her apotheosis. With this feeling she wrote to the Committee of General Safety:—"As I have yet some moments to live, may I hope, citizens, that you will permit me to sit for my portrait, as I would fain leave this souvenir to my friends. Besides, as the likenesses of good citizens is carefully preserved, so curiosity sometimes seeks those of great criminals, in order to perpetuate their crime. If you grant my request, be so good as to send me a miniature painter. I renew my request to be allowed to sleep alone. I hear the account of the arrest of my accomplice, Fauchet, constantly cried in the streets. I never saw him but once from a window, two years ago. I neither love nor esteem him, and he is the last man in the world to whom I would willingly have confided my project. If this declaration is of any service to him, I attest its truth."

XXIX. The president of the revolutionary tribunal, Montané, came on the next day, the 16th, to examine her. Touched by so much beauty and youth, and convinced of the sincerity of a fanaticism which almost absolved her in the eyes of human justice, he wished to save her life, and so framed his questions, and tacitly dictated the answers, as to induce the judges to look on them as the proof of madness rather than crime. But Charlotte frustrated his merciful attempt, and clung to her crime as though glorying in it. She was removed to the Conciergerie. Madame Richard, the wife of the gaoler, received her with the compassion inspired by this proximity of youth and the scaffold.

Thanks to the indulgence of her guardians, Charlotte obtained paper, pens, and solitude, of which she availed herself to write to Barbaroux a letter, in which she recounted all the events of her sojourn at Paris, in a style in which were mingled patriotism, mirth, and death-like sweetness and sorrow in the last cup of a farewell repast. After giving an almost facetious account of her journey to Paris in company with Montagnards, and of the sudden affection with which she had inspired a young passenger; "I did not know," she continues, "that the Committee of Public Safety had examined the passengers. I declared at first that I did not know them, in order to spare them the annoyance of an *interrogatoire;* and I followed on this occasion the maxim of my oracle Raynal, who says that you should not speak the truth to tyrants. It was through the lady who travelled with me that they learnt that I knew you, and that I had seen Duperret. You know his resolution; he told them the exact truth. Nothing can be alleged against him, but his firmness is a crime. I regretted, when too late, that I had spoken to him, and I endeavoured to repair my error by persuading him to fly and rejoin you; but he was too resolute. Would you believe it, Fauchet is imprisoned as my accomplice! He, who was ignorant of my very existence! But they are not satisfied with having only a woman to offer to the manes of a great man. Pardon me, O men! The name of Marat dishonours your race. He was a ferocious beast, who was about to devour the remains of France by the fire of civil war; thank Heaven, he is not a Frenchman by birth! At my first examination Chabot had the air of a madman; Legendre wished to have it believed he had seen me at his house that morning. I, who never dreamed of this man. I do not think him likely to become the tyrant of his country; besides I cannot punish them all. I believe the last words of Marat have been printed; but I question if he uttered any. The last words he said to me were, after I had given him your names and those of the administrators of the department of

Calvados, who are at Evreux, he told me to console myself, for he would have them all guillotined at Paris in a few days. These words decided his fate — though I confess that what entirely decided me was the courage with which our volunteers enrolled themselves on Sunday the 7th of July. You remember that I promised to make Pétion repent his unjust suspicions of my sentiments. I reflected how so many brave men were about to take the life of one man whose death (had their design succeeded) would have caused that of many excellent citizens — that this man was unworthy such an honour, and that the hand of a woman would suffice. — I confess, I had recourse to a perfidious artifice to induce him to receive me. I intended originally to sacrifice him on the summit of the Montagne, but he no longer went to the Convention. All the Parisians are such good citizens, that they cannot comprehend how a useless woman, whose longest term of life would be good for nothing, can calmly sacrifice herself for her country. As I was really perfectly collected when I left Marat's house to go to the Abbaye, I was pained at the cries of some women. But those who save their country reck not what it costs them. May peace be established as speedily as I desire. This is a great preliminary. — I enjoy this peace for the last two days. The happiness of my country is mine. A vivid imagination and a sensitive heart promised but a stormy life ; and I pray those who regret me to consider this and rejoice at it. Amongst the moderns there are but few patriots who know how to immolate themselves for their country. All is egotism. What a wretched people to form a republic!"

XXX. The letter was interrupted here by the removal of the captive to the Conciergerie. She continued in the following terms : — "I had the idea yesterday of offering my portrait to the department of Calvados. The Committee of Public Safety has sent me no reply, and it is now too late. I must have a defender ; that is the rule. I have chosen mine from the Montagne ; and at one time thought of naming Robespierre or Chabot. To-morrow, at eight o'clock, I am tried ; and probably at twelve, to use the language of the Romans, I shall have lived. I know not how my last moments will be passed : it is the end that crowns the work. I have no need to affect insensibility ; for up to this period I have not the least dread of death: I have never esteemed life save by its utility. Marat will not go to the Pantheon: he yet well deserved it. Remember the affair of Mademoiselle de Forbin, whose address in Switzerland I enclose, and tell her that I love her with all my heart. I am going to write to my father; but I shall say nothing to my other friends. I but ask from them to forget me speedily: their affliction would dishonour my memory. Tell General Wimpfen that I believe I have aided him to gain more than one battle by facilitating the peace. Adieu, Citizen. The prisoners of the Conciergerie, far from insulting me, like the people in the streets, seem to pity me. Misfortune renders us compassionate: this is my last reflection."

XXXI. Her letter to her father was brief, and written in a style rather of grief than mirth. "Pardon me for having disposed of my existence without your permission," said she. "I have avenged many innocent victims, and prevented many other disasters. The people, who will be disabused some day, will rejoice at their deliverance from a tyrant. If I sought to persuade you that I had gone to England, it was because I hoped to remain unknown. I hope that you will not be molested; but you have defenders at Caen. I have chosen Gustave Doulcet de Pontécoulant; but only for form's sake, as such a deed admits of no defence. Adieu, my dear papa; I pray of you to forget me, or rather, to rejoice at my fate — the cause is noble. I embrace my sister, whom I love with all my heart. Do not forget this verse of Corneille,—

"'Le crime fait la honte et non pas l'échafaud!'*

"To-morrow, at eight o'clock, I am tried." This allusion to a verse of her ancestor, recalling to her father the pride of their name and the heroism of their race, seemed to place her action beneath the safeguard of the genius of her family. She guarded against the entrance of weakness or reproach into the heart of her father, by showing him the illustrator of Roman sentiments applauding her devotion beforehand.

XXXII. The next morning, at eight o'clock, the *gens d'armes* conducted her to the revolutionary tribunal. The *salle* was situated above the vaults of the Conciergerie. A dark and steep stair, formed in the massive basement walls of the Palais de Justice, conducted the accused, and brought back the condemned criminals to their dungeons.

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* "The crime and not the scaffold causes shame!"

Before ascending, she arranged her hair and dress, to appear decently before death; then she said smilingly to the concierge, "Monsieur Richard, pray let my breakfast be ready on my return; my judges are doubtless pressed for time, and I wish to take my last meal with Madame Richard and yourself."

The hour fixed for the trial of Charlotte Corday was known in Paris the previous evening. Curiosity, horror, interest, and pity, had attracted an immense crowd. When she appeared, a murmur, as though of malediction, burst from this throng, but scarcely had she passed through them in the full blaze of her beauty, than this murmur of rage was changed into a shudder of interest and admiration. Her features, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, coloured by emotion, troubled by the confusion of a young girl exposed to the regards of so many, ennobled by the very grandeur of a crime which she bore in her heart as a virtue, and her pride and modesty, gave her a charm mingled with terror, that troubled all eyes and all hearts, and her very judges seemed to be culprits in her presence. Men deemed they saw divine justice, or the antique Nemesis, substituting conscience for law, and appearing to demand from human justice, not to absolve, but to recognise her and tremble!

XXXIII. When she was seated on the bench of the prisoners, she was asked if she had a defender. She replied that a friend had undertaken this office, but not seeing him, she supposed his courage had failed him. The president then assigned to her the young Chauveau Lagarde, afterwards illustrious by his defence of the queen, and already famous for his eloquence and courage in causes and times when the advocate shared the peril of his client. Chauveau Lagarde placed himself at the bar. Charlotte gazed on him, as though she feared lest, to save her life, her defender would abandon some part of her honour.

The widow of Marat wept whilst giving her evidence. Charlotte, moved by her grief, exclaimed, "Yes, yes,—'twas I that killed him." She then related the premeditation of the act for three months; her project of stabbing him in the

Convention; and the *ruse* she had employed to obtain access to him. "I confess," said she, with humility, "that this means was unworthy of me, but it was necessary to appear to esteem this man in order to obtain access to him." "Who inspired you with this hatred of Marat?" she was asked. "I did not need the hatred of any one else," she replied. "My own was sufficient; besides, you always execute badly that which you have not devised yourself." "What did you hate in him?" "His crimes." "What did you hope to effect by killing him?" "Restore peace to my country." "Do you, then, think that you have assassinated all the Marats?" "Since he is dead, perhaps, the others will tremble." The knife was shown her, that she might recognise it. She pushed it from her with a gesture of disgust. "Yes," replied she; "I recognise it." "What persons did you visit at Caen?" "Very few; I saw Larue, a municipal officer, and the Curé of Saint Jean." "Did you confess to a conforming or non-juring priest?" "Neither one nor the other." "Since when had you formed this design?" "Since the 31st of May, when the deputies of the people were arrested. I have killed one man to save a hundred thousand. I was a republican long before the Revolution." Fauchet was confronted with her. "I only know Fauchet by sight," said she, disdainfully. I look on him as a man devoid of principles; and I despise him." The accuser reproached her with having dealt the fatal stroke downwards, in order to render it more certain, and observed that she must doubtless have been well exercised in crime. At this suggestion, which destroyed all her ideas, by assimilating her to professed murderers, she uttered a cry of horror. "Oh, the monster!" exclaimed she. "He takes me for an assassin!"

Fouquier Tinville summed up, and demanded that sentence of death should be passed.

Her defender rose. "The accused," said he, "confesses her crime, she avows its long premeditation, and gives the most overwhelming details. Citizens, this is her whole defence. This imperturbable calm and entire forgetfulness of self, which reveals no remorse in presence of death, — this calm and this forgetfulness, sublime in one point of view, is not natural: they can only be explained by the excitement of political fanaticism, which placed the poignard in her hand.

It is for you to decide what weight so stern a fanaticism should have in the balance of justice. I leave all to your consciences."

The jury unanimously sentenced her to die. She heard their verdict unmoved; and the president having asked her if she had anything to say relative to the punishment inflicted on her, she made no reply; but, turning to her defender,— "Monsieur," said she, "you have defended me as I wished to be defended: I thank you; I owe you a proof of my gratitude and esteem, and I offer you one worthy of you. These gentlemen (pointing to the judges) have just declared my property confiscated; I owe something in the prison, and I bequeath to you the payment of this debt."

During her examination she perceived a painter engaged in taking her likeness; without interrupting the examination, she smilingly turned towards the artist, in order that he might the better see her features. She thought of immortality, and already sat for her portrait, to immortality.

XXXIV. Behind the painter stood a young man, whose fair hair, blue eyes, and pale complexion, marked him for a native of the north. His eyes were rivetted on the prisoner; and at each reply he shuddered and changed colour. He seemed to drink in her words, and to associate himself by gesture, attitude, and enthusiasm, with the sentiments she expressed. Unable frequently to repress his emotion, he drew to himself, by involuntary exclamations, the attention of the audience and of Charlotte Corday. At the moment when the president passed sentence of death, the young man half rose from his seat, with the gesture of a man who protests from the bottom of his heart, and then sank back, as though his strength had failed him. Charlotte, insensible to her own fate, perceived this movement, and comprehended that, at the moment when all on earth abandoned her, a kindred spirit attached itself to hers, and that amidst this hostile or indifferent throng she possessed an unknown friend, and she thanked him with a look.

XXXV. This young stranger was Adam Lux, a German republican, sent to Paris by the revolutionists of Mayence, to concert the movements of Germany with those of France, in the common cause of human reason and the liberty of the people. His eyes followed Charlotte until she disappeared amidst the *gens d'armes* beneath the arch of the stairs. His thoughts never quitted her.

XXXVI. On her return to the Conciergerie, which was so soon to yield her up to the scaffold, Charlotte Corday smiled on her companions in prison, who had ranged themselves in the corridors and courts to see her pass. She said to the concierge — "I had hoped that we should breakfast together once more, but the judges detained me so long that you must forgive me for having broken my word." The executioner arrived: she requested him to allow her time to finish a letter, which was neither the outpouring of weakness nor regret, but the last act of wounded friendship — addressing an eternal reproach to the cowardly spirit which had abandoned her.

It was addressed to Doulcet de Pontécoulant, whom she had seen at her aunt's, and on whom she believed she had called in vain to be her defender. The letter was as follows: — "Doulcet de Pontécoulant is a coward, to have refused to defend me when it was so easy. He who undertook it performed his task with all possible dignity, and I shall retain a grateful recollection of him to my last moments." Her indignation was unjust; the young Pontécoulant, who was absent from Paris, had not received her letter: his generosity and courage were a sufficient guarantee that he would have accepted the office; and Charlotte bore an error and an injustice to the scaffold.

The artist who had sketched Charlotte's likeness at the tribunal, was M. Hauer, a painter, and officer of the national guard of the section of the Théâtre Français. On her return to the prison, she requested the concierge to allow him to finish his work, and on his arrival Charlotte thanked him for the interest he appeared to take in her, and quietly sat to him, as though whilst she permitted him to transmit her form and features to posterity, she also charged him to hand down her mind and her patriotism to unborn generations. She conversed with M. Hauer on his profession, the events of the day, and the peace of mind she felt after the execution of her design; she also spoke of her young friends at Caen, and requested him to paint a miniature from the portrait, and send it to her family.

Suddenly a gentle knock was heard at the door, and the executioner entered. Charlotte, turning round, perceived the scissors and red chemise he carried over his arm. "What! already," exclaimed she, turning pale. Then recovering her composure, and glancing at the unfinished portrait, "Monsieur," said she, to the artist, "I know not how to thank you for the trouble you have taken ; I have only this to offer you. Keep it in memory of your kindness and my gratitude." As she spoke, she took the scissors from the executioner, and severing a lock of her long fair hair, gave it to M. Hauer.

This portrait, interrupted by death, is still in the possession of the family of M. Hauer. The head only was painted, and the bust merely sketched. But the painter, who watched the preparations for the scaffold, was so struck with the sinister splendour added by the red chemise to the beauty of his model, that after Charlotte's death, he painted her in this costume.

A priest, sent by the public accuser, presented himself to offer the last consolations of religion. "Thank," said she, to him, "those who have had the attention to send you, but I need not your ministry. The blood I have spilt, and my own which I am about to shed, are the only sacrifices I can offer the Eternal." The executioner then cut off her hair, bound her hands, and put on the *chemise des condamnés.* "This," said she, "is the toilette of death, arranged by somewhat rude hands, but it leads to immortality."

She collected her long hair, looked at it for the last time, and gave it to Madame Richard. As she mounted the fatal cart, a violent storm broke over Paris, but the lightning and rain did not disperse the crowd who blocked up the squares, the bridges, and the streets along which she passed. Hordes of women, or rather furies, followed her with the fiercest imprecations ; but, insensible to these insults, she gazed on the populace with eyes beaming with serenity and compassion.

XXXVII. The sky cleared up, and the rain which wetted her to the skin, displayed the exquisite symmetry of her form, like those of a woman leaving the bath. Her hands bound behind her back, obliged her to hold up her head, and this forced rigidity of the muscles gave more fixity to her attitude, and set off the outlines of her figure. The rays of the setting sun fell on her head; and her complexion, heightened by the red chemise, seemed of an unearthly brilliancy. Robespierre, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins, had placed themselves on her passage, to gaze on her; for all those who anticipated assassination were curious to study in her features the expression of that fanaticism which might threaten them on the morrow. She resembled celestial vengeance appeased and transfigured, and from time to time she seemed to seek a glance of intelligence on which her eye could rest. Adam Lux awaited the cart at the entrance of the Rue St. Honoré, and followed it to the foot of the scaffold. "He engraved in his heart," to quote his own words, "this unutterable sweetness amidst the barbarous outcries of the crowd, that look so gentle, yet penetrating,—these vivid flashes that broke forth like burning ideas from these bright eyes, in which spoke a soul as intrepid as tender. Charming eyes, which should have melted a stone."

XXXVIII. Thus an enthusiastic and unearthly attachment accompanied her, without her knowledge, to the very scaffold, and prepared to follow her, in hope of an eternal reunion. The cart stopped, and Charlotte, at the sight of the fatal instrument, turned pale, but, soon recovering herself, ascended the scaffold with as light and rapid a step as the long chemise and her pinioned arms permitted. When the executioner, to bare her neck, removed the handkerchief that covered her bosom, this insult to her modesty moved her more than her impending death; then, turning to the guillotine, she placed herself under the axe. The heavy blade fell, and her head rolled on the scaffold. One of the assistants, named Legros, took it in his hand and struck it on the cheek. It is said that a deep crimson suffusion overspread the face, as though dignity and modesty had for an instant lasted longer even than life.

XXXIX. Such was the death of Marat; such were the life and death of Charlotte Corday. In the face of murder history dares not praise, and in the face of heroism, dares not condemn her. The appreciation of such an act places us in the terrible alternative of blaming virtue or applauding assassination. Like the painter who, despairing of rendering the expression of a mingled sentiment, cast a veil over the face of the figure, we must leave this mystery to be debated in the abysses of the human heart. There are deeds of which men are no judges, and which mount, without appeal, direct to the tribunal of God. There are human actions so strange a mixture of weakness and strength, pure intent and culpable means, error and truth, murder and martyrdom, that we know not whether to term them crime or virtue. The culpable devotion of Charlotte Corday is amongst those acts which admiration and horror would leave eternally in doubt, did not morality reprove them. Had we to find for this sublime liberatrix of her country, and generous murderess of a tyrant, a name which should at once convey the enthusiasm of our feelings towards her and the severity of our judgment on her action, we would coin a phrase combining the extreme of admiration and horror, and term her the Angel of Assassination.

A few days afterwards Adam Lux published the "Apology of Charlotte Corday," and associated himself with her deed, in order to share her martyrdom. Arrested and sent to the Abbaye, he exclaimed, as he entered the prison, "I shall die, then, for her." He perished soon after, saluting, as the altar of liberty and love, the scaffold which the blood of his model had hallowed. The heroism of Charlotte was sung by the poet André Chénier, who was himself so soon to die for that common fatherland of all great souls — pure liberty.

"Whose is this tomb?" sings the German poet, Klopstock. "It is the tomb of Charlotte. Let us gather flowers and scatter them over her ashes, for she is dead for her country. No, no, gather nothing; let us seek a weeping willow, and plant it o'er her tomb, for she is dead for her country. No, no, plant nothing; but weep, and let your tears be blood, for she is dead in vain for her country!" Vergniaud, on learning, in his dungeon, of the crime, trial, and death of Charlotte, exclaimed, "She destroys us, but she teaches us how to die."

## BOOK XLV.

I. THE purest virtue is deceived in her aim when she borrows the hand and weapons of crime. The blood of Marat intoxicated the people. The Montagne, Robespierre, Danton, happy at being freed from a rival whose influence with the multitude they feared, cast his corpse to them, in order that they might erect it into an idol. The Convention ordained the worship of Marat as a diversion to anarchy, and permitted a god to be made of him whom it had blushed to own as a colleague. The night after his death the people hung garlands at his door, and the Convention inaugurated his bust in their hall. The sections appeared at the Convention, to demand that he should be buried in the Pantheon. Others asked that his body should be embalmed, and carried through the departments to the very limits of the world. Some proposed that an empty tomb should be erected to him beneath every tree of liberty. Robespierre alone strove to moderate this idolatry of the Jacobins. "Doubtless," said he, "the honours of the poignard are reserved for me; priority has been established by chance, and my fall is near at hand."

The Convention decreed that it would be present *en masse* at the funeral. The painter David arranged the obsequies, and strove to imitate those of Cæsar. He placed the body of Marat in the church of the Cordeliers, on a catafalque. The poignard, the bath, the block of wood, the inkstand, pens and papers were displayed by his side, as the arms of the philosopher and the proofs of his stoical indigence. Deputations of the sections succeeded each other with harangues, incense, and flowers, and pronounced terrible vows over the corpse.

II. In the evening the funeral *cortége* went forth, lighted by the flambeau of the church, and did not reach the place of sepulture until midnight. The place selected for the reception of Marat's remains was the very one where he had so often harangued and agitated the people, the court of the club of Cordeliers, as we inter a warrior on his field of battle. The body was lowered into the grave under the shade of those trees whose leaves, illuminated by thousands of lamps, shed over his tomb the soft and serene light of ancient elysium. The people, under the banners of the sections, the departments, the electors, the Commune, the Cordeliers, the Jacobins, and the Convention, assisted at this ceremony. Derisive apotheosis! The president of the Assembly, Thuriot, addressed the last national adieu to his shade.

He announced that the Convention would place the statue of Marat by the side of that of Brutus. The club of the Cordeliers claimed his heart. Enclosed in an urn, it was suspended to the roof of the hall of Assembly. The society voted him also an altar. "Precious relics of a god!" exclaimed an orator at the foot of this altar, "shall we be perjured in presence of thy manes? Thou demandest vengeance of us, and thy assassins yet breathe!"

Pilgrimages of the people congregated every Sunday at the tomb of Marat, and mingled the heart of this apostle of murder in the same adoration as that of the Christ of peace. The theatres were decorated with his image. Places and streets changed their names for his. The mayor of Nismes caused himself to be designated the Marat of the south; the mayor of Strasbourg, the Marat of the Rhine. The conventional carrier called his troops the army of Marat. The widow of "*l'ami du peuple*" demanded vengeance from the Convention for her husband, and a tomb for herself. Young girls, dressed in white, and holding crowns of cypress and oak in their hands, sung around the funeral car hymns to Marat. All the burden of these chaunts was sanguinary. The poignard of Charlotte Corday, in lieu of stanching blood, appeared to have opened the veins of France.

III. The Convention acquired ascendency everywhere. After the rencontre at Vernon, where the advanced guard had fled at the first shock of the cannon, the fugitive Girondists at Caen sought to regain Bordeaux, abandoning Normandy and Brittany to the royalists on one side, and to the commissioners of the Convention on the other. Pétion, Louvet, Barbaroux, Salles, Meilhan, Kervélégan, Gorsas, Girey-Duprey, Marchenna, a Spaniard, voluntarily enrolled in the Girondist ranks; and, lastly, Riouffe, a young Marseillais, who adhered to this cause, even in its disasters, assumed the uniform of the volunteers of Finisterre, and mixed with those soldiers, in order to reach Brittany. Guadet had come to rejoin them shortly afterwards at Caen, He only aided in their ruin. Buzot, Duchâtel, Bergoing, Lesage, and Valady, departed with the battalions. Lanjuinais had preceded them to Brest, scattering in all directions his indignation and his courage. Henri Larivière and Mollevault, members of the fatal Commission of the Twelve, preceded the fugitives to Quimper, and prepared them asylums, not auxiliaries. Reduced to the number of nineteen, and separated from the battalion of Finisterre, which had protected them as far as Lamballe, the deputies quitted the highways, and marched by cross roads, soliciting from cottage to cottage that hospitality which might each moment betray them. Being recognised at Moncontour by some federals, and having heard a murmur about them of "that is Pétion,—that is Buzot," they took refuge in the woods. Their retreat was suspected. They passed weary hours concealed under the leaves. The rain streamed over their benumbed bodies. A young citizen of Moncontour, who had watched their flight, came to them, and directed them that night towards a lonely house, where they had some hours' repose.

They heard the *générale* beaten by the drums in the village. They searched the fields, the woods, and the houses to seize them. Giroust and Lesage separated from their companions, and accepted hospitality in the suburbs. The others continued their route. They had arms. They intimidated the peasants whom they could not seduce. They escaped by a series of miracles from the dangers which surrounded them.

IV. Meanwhile hunger, thirst, anxiety, and illness decimated them. Cussy, tortured by an attack of gout, groaned at every step. Buzot, wearied out, threw away his arms, as a burden too heavy for him. Barbaroux, although scarcely twenty-eight years old, had the unwieldy stature and *embonpoint* of a man advanced in age. A sprain had inflamed his foot. He could not walk without the assistance of Pétion and Louvet, who by turns gave him their arm. Riouffe, his feet torn with walking, dragged himself along, staining the road with his blood. Pétion, Salles, and Louvet alone preserved their indefatigable vigour. The wounded and the sick like better to await death on the spot than to fly from it. The energy of Barbaroux, however, made them blush at their weakness. They arose, and continued their way in silence, and laid down some leagues farther on in some high grass, which hid their bodies and protected their slumber. Overcome with fatigue, enervated by hunger, they at last reached Quimper, but dared not enter it. They sent one of their guides to warn Kervélégan of their approach, and ask from him the necessary indications to reach the retreats which his friendship had doubtless assured them. This guide did not return. They waited for two-and-thirty hours, without shelter or nourishment, beaten by the rain, and in a marsh whose freezing waters benumbed their limbs. Cussy invoked death as more clement than his agony. Riouffe and Girey-Duprey lost the gaiety of their youth, which had until then sustained them. Buzot wrapped himself up in silent melancholy; Barbaroux even felt his hope, though not his courage, vanish. Louvet pressed to his breast the loaded weapon, which contained his deliverance and his death. The image of the adored female who sought his track to rejoin him alone determined him to live. Pétion preserved the stoical indifference of a man who defies fate to precipitate him lower, after having raised him so high. He had reached the depths of misery, and reposed there.

V. In the mean time Kervélégan watched at Quimper. A messenger on horseback, sent by him, discovered the fugitives in the marsh. He conducted them to the house of a peasant, where fire, bread, and wine somewhat restored them. A constitutional curate of the environs received them afterwards. They there recovered their strength, and afterwards separated in different groups, where each one had a different fortune and end. Five amongst them, in which number were Salles, Girey-Duprey, and Cussy, received an asylum at Kervélégan's; Buzot was confided to the discretion of a generous citizen, in a house in the faubourg of Quimper; Pétion and Guadet, sheltered themselves in an isolated country house; Louvet, Barbaroux, and Riouffe in the house of a patriot of the town. The beloved of Louvet had preceded him to Quimper. She brought to her friend, the devotion, the hope, and the illusion of love. As to Brissot, he was at this juncture arrested at Moulins, and transported to Paris, there to languish in prison. Vergniaud, Pétion, Guadet, Buzot, that they might not be separated from Barbaroux, who was dying, refused to embark at Brest, and awaited in their asylums the cure of their friend. Louvet retired with Lodoiska into a cottage, which she had prepared for him. He there tasted, between two tempests, those moments of happiness so much the more poignant when menaced,—that halt of the unfortunate on the road to death. Barbaroux, so light in his amours that his inconstancy never knew a durable attachment, envied, he said, this happiness which the proscribed Louvet owed to devotion and fidelity.

The news of the capture of Toulon by the English redoubled the surveillance and the persecution of the patriots towards the federalists accused of the dismemberment of the country. Louvet, Barbaroux, Buzot, and Pétion embarked at length one night in a fishing-boat, which was to conduct them to a vessel anchored off the coast. Couched under some mats in the bottom of the hold, they passed through twenty-two republican vessels without being discovered. These proscribed men entered the waters of La Gironde, and disembarked at Bec-d'Ambès, a small port in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux. They thought they had attained the land of liberty,—it had become the land of death.

VI. While the vanquished Girondists fell one by one into the hands of their enemies, or prolonged so painfully the agony of their party, by flight, the republic, established in its centre, was invaded at its extremities. The frontiers were unprotected, the places conquered by the army of Custine in Germany, and our own places in the north, fell under the cannon of the coalition. We have seen that Custine, having fallen back in Landau, had left an imposing garrison at Mayence, as the promise of a second invasion of Germany. General Meunier, known by the marvellous works at Cherbourg, commanded the place. Kléber, Doyré, and Dubayet, general officers as enlightened as intrepid, were his lieutenants; Rewbell and Merlin de Thionville, at once representatives and soldiers, had shut themselves up in Mayence, in order that the troops should fight under the very eye of the Convention. Two hundred pieces of ordnance defended the place.

The blockade was composed of fifty-seven battalions and forty squadrons. Grain was abundant in the city, but there was a deficiency of powder. The prodigies of ability, of boldness, and courage which Merlin de Thionville exemplified, heart and hand, to the troops, left, nevertheless, only the hope of a heroic defence.

This defence even paralysed twenty thousand of our best soldiers, blockaded on the other side of the Rhine in their conquest. Custine sent an officer to the Prussian army. This officer demanded permission to cross the lines as a flag of truce, accompanied by a Prussian officer, to carry to Mayence the order of honourable capitulation. The commissioners of the Convention, Merlin and Rewbell, and the generals commanding the town and the troops, assembled a council of war, and energetically repelled this insinuation. The blockade was closed by the Austrians and Prussians, and converted into a siege. The French resuming every moment the offensive by terrible sorties, forced the hostile army to conquer again each step of approach to the walls. General Meunier, struck by a ball which broke his knee, expired some days afterwards. The Prussians, seized with admiration and respect, ceased their fire, to give the French time to raise the tomb of their general in one of the bastions of the town. "I lose an enemy who has done me much mischief," exclaimed Frederic William, "but France loses a great man."

The bombardment commenced with three hundred pieces of ordnance. The mills which furnished flour to the town and its garrison were set on fire. Meat, as well as bread, was wanting. Horses, dogs, cats, and mice were devoured by the inhabitants. Pitiless famine compelled the generals to send from the town all useless mouths. Old men, women, and children, driven from its bosom to the number of two or three thousand, were equally repulsed by the Prussians, and expired, between the two armies, under the cannon of the batteries, or in the agony of hunger. The hospitals, without provisions, without medicines, without roofs, could no longer shelter the wounded. The town capitulated.

The troops departed free, with their colours and their arms, under the condition of not fighting for one year against Prussia.

Fifteen thousand soldiers, fire-proof by the long siege of Mayence, were despatched to La Vendée.

VII. At the same juncture, Condé, one of the frontier places in the north, fell. Dampierre died endeavouring to succour it. General Chancel, shut up with four thousand soldiers in the town, had neither provisions nor ammunition. The soldiers' rations were only two ounces of bread, and could not even furnish more than four days' provisions at that rate. They were obliged to surrender, as prisoners, on the 12th of July. Valenciennes, destroyed by bombs, surrendered on the 28th to the English and the Austrians. General Ferrand, that brave lieutenant of Dumouriez, though seventy years of age, had defended the town for three months, as if he desired to make his tomb of its ruins. The fortifications, shaken to their foundations by the battering of two hundred thousand balls, thirty thousand shells, and fifty thousand bombs, left breaches large enough for the passage of cavalry. The terror alone of the name of our brave soldiers, and of Ferrand, protected the place. Valenciennes at last capitulated, and the garrison, after having slain twenty thousand foes, and lost, itself, seven thousand fighting men, were permitted to return to France with their arms and colours.

The news of these disasters alarmed Paris, without discouraging it. The constancy of the Convention in the midst of reverses strengthened the public mind. Every one was afflicted, no one despaired of the country. The news from the departments reassured the Assembly. These reverses on the one side, and this success on the other, rendered the Jacobites at once mistrustful and rash.

Demonstrations against Custine multiplied, and were each moment more bitter. This general was the more readily accused, as more had been hoped from him. Bazire demanded the arrest of Custine in the midst of his army. Levasseur de la Sarthe charged himself with this perilous mission. Arrived at the camp, the representative desired a review of the troops: forty thousand men were under arms. The soldiers, who suspected Levasseur of coming to carry off their chief, refused him military honours. Levasseur exacted them, and made them lower their colours. "Soldiers of the Republic!" said he to them, "the Convention has arrested General Custine." "Let him be restored to us!" cried the angry troops. The representative braved the clamour.

"Soldiers!" resumed he, "if Custine be innocent, he will be restored to you; if he be guilty, his blood will expiate his crimes. No pardon for traitors! Woe to rebels!"

VIII. The silence of duty alone responded to this speech. The general was arrested. Custine did not imitate Dumouriez. He obeyed, and preferred the scaffold to the land of the stranger. Arrived in Paris, he found there a remnant of popularity, which was imputed as a crime to him. He walked about the Palais Royal, and was admired by the females and the younger classes.

This passive obedience encouraged the Jacobins to further denunciations. Garat, the Minister of the Interior, and Dalbarade, the Minister of Marine, became there the objects of odious insinuation. Robespierre, who had not favoured anarchy, but in so far that he believed anarchy necessary to the triumph of the Revolution, placed himself energetically against the instigators of disorder, from the moment that he thought the Revolution assured. He defended the Committee of Public Safety when accused of too great leniency, although he made no part of it himself; he defended Danton; he defended Garat and Dalbarade against Chabot and Rossignol; he denounced the denunciators. The murmurs of the ultra-Jacobins, which drowned his voice, did not intimidate him.

Some days afterwards, Robespierre opposed himself, with the same firmness, to the accusations which were generally circulated against the nobles employed in the armies. "What signify all these commonplaces you make use of, regarding the nobility, just now?" said he. "My antagonists here are no more republicans than myself. Do you desire to keep the Committee of Public Safety in leading strings? New men — patriots of a day — desire to destroy in the mind of the people their most ancient friends. I cite, for example, Danton, who is calumniated. Danton, on whom no one has a right to lay the slightest reproach! Danton, whom they cannot underrate until after having proved that they have more energy, talent, or love for the country, than he! They give great praise to Marat for having the right to rail against the present patriots. What does it avail to praise the dead, provided one may calumniate the living!"

IX. While Robespierre, seeking popularity in public reason and the power of government, thus moderated the Jacobins, and assumed the position of a minister, Danton allowed himself to be, in a manner, protected by Robespierre. The fall of the Girondists had disconcerted Danton. The Girondists were, for him, one of the weights of the equilibrium, which he had hoped to establish to his advantage in the Convention, by turning, in his own person, one while towards La Montagne, and at another towards La Plaine. No wavering was longer possible, since the triumph of the Commune. It was incumbent either to be a proscriber or proscribed. Danton was equally repugnant to one and the other of these two parties. Absorbed in the delight of the attachment with which the young female he had just espoused had inspired him, seeking repose, humbled by his sanguinary renown, and desiring to redeem it by amnesties and generosity natural to the present state of his heart, Danton desired to repose in his domestic happiness, and, if not to abdicate, at least to adjourn his ambition. Fatigued with being terrible, he wished to be loved.

La Montagne really did like him. He was, in a crisis, their beacon; in tumult, their voice; in action, their hand; but, since Marat had disappeared from La Montagne, Danton found Robespierre there, a more respected, more serious rival than Marat.

X. Furthermore, Danton had arrived, at least for a moment, at that state of moral lassitude which sometimes seizes upon and consumes the most fiery ambition, when it is not sustained by a disinterested idea. A man of passion, and not of theory, he experienced the weakness of nature. Private passion fatigues and wears itself out; public passion, never. Robespierre had this advantage over Danton, — that his passion was indefatigable, because it was disinterested. Danton was a man; Robespierre was an idea. Thus, Danton had for some time astonished his friends by the languor and incoherence of his resolutions.

In this disposition of mind, Danton deserted the tribune of the Jacobins, incessantly occupied by Robespierre, spoke rarely at the Cordeliers, and was silent in the Convention. He appeared to abandon the Revolution to its course, and to seat himself upon the bank, to see the wreck pass and await the reaction of opinion. But Danton had been too great to be forgotten. Oblivion protects mediocrity. The discontented Revolution fretted itself against him, and against his friends. Legendré, Camille Desmoulins, Fabré d'Eglantine, and Châbot, had become, like himself, suspected at the Cordeliers and the Jacobins.

XI. Reproaches made Danton smile with disdain, and inspired him even with a secret pride.

He did not pretend to austerity, he had not the hypocrisy of disinterestedness, he rather displayed than concealed his weaknesses. He counted rather upon obscurity. A natural death had delivered him from the superiority of Mirabeau; the poignard had disembarrassed him of Marat; the 31st of May had relieved him from the superior eloquence of Vergniaud; chance might free him from the rivalry of Robespierre. Time flies swiftly in revolutions. It suffices to place oneself upon the route of time, in order that he may bring you, at his hour, all that fortune has in store. Thus, instinctively, reasoned Danton.

It was at this period that Danton, pressed by his young wife and new family to separate his cause and his name from the cause and name of terror, which began to raise the indignation of good citizens, decided on quitting the scene, flying from Paris, and retiring to Arcis-sur-Aube. Danton was too well versed in the mysteries of the human heart, not to comprehend that this retreat, in such a moment, was too humble or too proud an act for a man of his importance in the republic. To separate himself from the Convention in the crisis of its perils and its oppression, was to declare that he felt himself useless to the country, or it was to declare that he would not join in a compact with the government. Such an attitude was an abdication or a threat. Danton knew it. He, therefore, disguised, under pretext of lassitude and exhaustion of strength, the true causes of his retirement. He alleged, also, the necessity of presenting his new wife to his mother and his father-in-law, M. Ricordin, who still lived.

The principal motive of this retreat — the motive which he avowed to his wife and his relations, in the secrecy of domestic confidence — was the horror with which the approaching sentence of the queen, Marie Antoinette, inspired him.

Before his departure, Danton had a secret conference with

Robespierre. He humbled himself before his rival, so far as to confide to him his discouragement at the state of public affairs. He requested him to defend him, during his absence, against the calumny which the Cordeliers incessantly heaped upon his patriotism and probity. Robespierre, satisfied with this deference and the retirement of the only man who could compete with him in the republic, took good care not to retain Danton. The two rivals, in appearance friends, swore to each other mutual esteem and constant support. Danton departed.

XII. Danton, in his rural retreat of Arcis-sur-Aube, lived entirely occupied with his love, the care of his young children, the surveillance of his domestic interests, the happiness of seeing his mother again, the friends of his youth, and his paternal fields. He appeared to have entirely cast aside the weight, and even the remembrance, of public affairs. He did not write a single letter, — he did not receive one from Paris. The thread of all his plots was cut. One deputy alone, from the Convention, visited him sometimes: it was the deputy Courtois, his compatriot, who possessed some mills at Arcis-sur-Aube. Their conversations turned upon the dangers of the country. In his intimate conversations with his wife, his mother, and M. Ricordin, Danton did not disguise his sincere repentance for the revolutionary transports into which the fire of passion had cast his name and hand. He sought to wash himself of all association in the massacres of September. Neither did he dissimulate his hope of again acquiring the ascendency due to his political genius, when present convulsions should have worn out the shallow talent and weak characters who reigned in the Convention. He spoke of Robespierre as a dreamer, sometimes cruel, sometimes virtuous, always chimerical.

He spent much time in reading the Roman historians. He also wrote a great deal; but he burned it as soon as written. He desired to leave no trace of himself but his name.

XIII. Robespierre, on the contrary, although ill and exhausted by mental labours which would have consumed other men, forgot himself, to devote his powers with more ardour than ever to the pursuit of his ideal of government. He augmented his ambition in confounding it entirely with the ambition of the republic he desired to found. The past imported little to him, provided he were the main spring of all matters. The weaknesses, the repentance, the landed and commercial aristocracy of the Girondists, had sincerely persuaded him that these men desired to retrograde towards monarchy, or to constitute a republic, wherein the dominion of wealth should be substituted to the rule of the church and the throne, and where the people would have some thousands of tyrants in lieu of having only one. He had seen in the citizens the most dangerous enemies of universal democracy and of philosophic levelling.

Since their fall, he thought he had attained his end. This end was the representative sovereignty of all the citizens, concentrated in an election as extensive as the people themselves, and acting by the people, and for the people, in an elective council, which should be all the government. The ambition of Robespierre, so often calumniated then and since, went not beyond this.

XIV. He had also changed his attitude and language from the time the Girondists had disappeared. He only studied three things, — to rally public opinion in the Convention through the Jacobins, of whom he was the oracle, to resist the anarchical encroachments of the Commune, who threatened the independence of the representation, and, in short, to establish harmony and unity of action in the organisation of a committee of government. He did not mingle any personal cupidity with these ideas. His popularity even, from day to day more general and fanatical amongst his followers, was for him an instrument and not an end. He dispensed it with as much prodigality as it had cost him care and patience to acquire it.

XV. From this day, Robespierre became more assiduous than ever at the evening meetings of the Jacobins. He turned the thoughts of this society towards the great problems of social organisation, to distract them from factions, the reign of which, according to him, ought to be passed. He kept aloof, with more apparent disgust, from all the corrupted men who desired to mingle demagogism with the Revolution, as impure alloy is mixed with pure metal to render it more pliable and easier to mould. He did not wish to abase republican principles to the level of an oppressed and worn out people. He desired to elevate the people's thoughts to the most spiritual height of principles. He united himself in most intimate friendship with the very small number of rigid, but honest men, who urged on this vigorous, but vague and implacable logic of democracy almost to adoration. These were Couthon, Lebas, and St. Just, men pure until then of all except fanaticism. No blood stained them yet. They hoped that their system would prevail, through the evidence of reason alone, and by the sole attraction of truth; but they were, unfortunately, resolved to refuse nothing to their system, not even the sacrifice of entire generations. These deputies, few in number, assembled almost every evening at the house of their oracle; they there inflamed their imaginations with the ravishing perspective of the justice, the equality, and the felicity promised by the new doctrine on earth. They there spoke only of the happiness of abdication from every public position, immediately after the triumph of their principles, of a humble trade to exercise, and of a field to cultivate. Robespierre himself, apparently more weary of agitation, and more restless, spoke only of an isolated hut in the depth of Artois, whither he would take his wife, and whence he would contemplate, from the bosom of his private felicity, the general happiness.

XVI. Although their theories were different, the minds of Robespierre and Danton accorded then in concentrating the power in the Convention.

They did not present the constitution to the eyes of the people but as a plan of institution in perspective, over which a veil would be thrown after having shown it at a distance to the nation. For the moment, to govern was to conquer. The government best adapted to assure victory over the inimical factions of the Revolution, was, according to them, the best government. France and liberty were in peril. They were institutions of peril which France required. The laws ought to be arms, not laws.

The Convention should be the arm as much as the head of the republic. Every member of this assembly had this instinct — that of safety when the laws were broken. This instinct manifested itself on the instant in their acts. The Convention did not ask for the dictatorship; she did not delegate it; she took it. This dictatorship was resumed, after the 31st of May, in the Committee of Public Safety.

In the same manner that the nation had recalled to itself its inalienable sovereignty in 1789, the Convention called to itself every power in 1793. The appointed forces were essentially weaker than the direct ones. In extreme crises people revoke their delegations, whether they may be termed royalty, or law and magistracy. They could not hesitate.

Such was the situation of the Convention in the month of July, 1793. It was condemned, by this situation, either to tyranny or death. Had it accepted death, the nation and the Revolution would have perished with it. It seized the dictatorship. It was not to blame. There are legitimate usurpations — they are those which save the ideas, the people, and the institutions. It is not, then, for usurpation that history should reproach the Convention, but the means it employed in exercising it. The farther laws are separated from a government, the more ought equity to reign in their place. It is on this condition alone, that God and posterity absolve governments. Conscience is the law of laws.

XVII. It is a law of power, when it becomes action, of incessantly stretching to contract again; and personifying itself amongst a small number of men. Political bodies may have a thousand heads and a thousand languages, while they remain deliberative assemblies. They require only a hand when they possess themselves of the executive power. The Convention had at first fully, afterwards completely, intuitive perception of this truth. It had commenced by creating ministers, invested with a certain responsibility, and with a certain independence, as under the Girondist ministry of Roland. It had afterwards almost entirely annulled the action of these ministers, instituted government commissions, as special and diverse as any of these ministries; afterwards, it had created government commissions in the very bosom of the national representation, and distributed amongst these great commissions the different functions of power. Each of these commissions brought up, by the organ of its reporter, the results of its deliberations, for the sanction of the whole Convention. The Convention thus reigned well; but it ruled with incoherence and weakness. A bond of unity was wanting to these scattered commissions. They were advices, not orders, which they drew up.

It reorganised the Committee of Public Safety, and decreed to it all the government. This was the abdication of the Convention ; but an abdication which gave it the empire.

XVIII. The name of the Committee of Public Safety was already well known in the Convention. From the month of March preceding, every man of presentiment in the Assembly, as Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Isnard, Albitte, Bentabole, and Quinette, had demanded unity of views, the force of action concentrated in a committee of few members, and reuniting in its hands all the scattered threads of the too much relaxed design of executive power. They had instituted this centre of government. The Girondists had there been chosen by majority. This instrument of force was in their hands, had they known how to make use of it. The chief members of the Committee of Public Safety, to the number of twenty-five, were Dubois-Crancé, Pétion, Gensonné, Guyton de Morveau (the assistant of Buffon), Robespierre, Barbaroux, Ruhl, Vergniaud, Fabre d'Eglantine, Buzot, Delmas, Condorcet, Guadet, Bréard, Camus, Prieur (de la Marne), Camille Desmoulins, Barrère, Quinette, Danton, Sièyés, Lasource, Isnard, Jean Debry, and Cambacérès — that future oracle of despotism sprung from the councils of liberty.

This committee possessed the power of originating all laws and measures which were rendered exigent by the danger of the country, within and without. It called the ministers into their centre, it controlled their acts, and rendered an account every eight days to the Convention.

Some Girondists themselves, united to Danton, proposed to strengthen it by transforming and purifying it. Buzot alone, foreseeing death in the blade his friends were forging, combated this idea. It was adopted in spite of his entreaties. The number of the members in the committee was limited to nine in lieu of twenty-five. The right of secrecy was bestowed upon it, the surveillance of all the ministers, the right of suspending the decrees which it should judge to be prejudicial to the national interest, and the right to adopt of itself decrees of urgency. Private funds were allowed to it. Only one single act of sovereignty was interdicted, — that of arbitrary imprisonment of the citizens.

The Committee of Public Safety was to be renewed every month by an election of the Assembly. Its members were Barrère, Delmas, Bréard, Cambon, Danton, Guyton de Morveau, Theilhard, Lacroix (d'Eure et Loire) and Robert Lindet. Danton had been exiled by the Girondists in this committee, in order to neutralise his influence in the midst of the weak and indecisive members of La Plaine. They were deceived by their tactics. Danton not finding energy amongst his colleagues, sought it in the Commune. Danton had still reserved to himself in the committee the direction of exterior affairs, towards which his universal genius, military and diplomatic, led him. He there studied government as a man who meditated the assumption of it on some future day.

After the defeat of the Girondists, Danton withdrew himself from these duties, which might awaken envy. He retired to his bench, and shrouded himself in apparent indifference. Envy followed him there. He was accused on account of his retreat, as he had been accused for his authority in the committee. He saw that certain names could not escape the attention of mankind, either by *éclat* or by obscurity, and that men of fame were not permitted to extinguish or conceal themselves. "Form another committee," said he; "form it without me, stronger and more numerous, I will be its spur in place of being its bridle." These words, which betrayed so high a feeling of his importance, and such humiliating disdain for his colleagues, smelt of the usurper and unveiled ambition.

They were applauded, but noted.

XIX. After successive hesitation, nominations, and expulsions, the definitive committee of public safety, proclaimed by Danton himself to be a provisional government, was invested with every power. This once Danton, who had not confidence in an institution from which he was excluded, imprudently refused to enter it. Whether he thought he should appear greater when seen alone, or whether he desired to isolate himself in disgust from public affairs, he caused himself to be represented by Hérault de Séchelles, one of his partisans, and by Thuriot, one of his organs. Robespierre, also, abstained from entering the committee at first, that he might not eclipse Danton. But his friends had the majority, and caused his spirit to rule therein. The eight members were St. Just, Couthon, Barrère, Gasparin, Thuriot, Hérault de Séchelles, Robert Lindet, and Jean-Bon-Saint-André. Gasparin having retired, the unanimous cry of the Convention put Robespierre in his place. Carnot and Prieur de la Côte-d'Or were called there, a few days afterwards, from the necessity of personifying the military genius of France in presence of the armies of the coalition. At length Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois completed it, and carried the spirit of Jacobinism to such a height, that La Montagne complained of seeing themselves languish under the chilly breath of Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon.

Thus was constituted this decemvirate, which took upon itself, during this convulsion of fourteen months, all the dangers, all the power, all the glory, and all the maledictions of posterity.

XX. The members of the Committee of Public Safety partook of its attributes according to their capacities. Ability cast the lot and distinguished the ranks. Influence was there as ubiquitous as service. It deposed importance, without ever destroying unity. The extremity of the crisis, the unextinguishable zeal, the danger of weakening itself by disunion, the sworn and guarded secrecy, and the difficulty of the task bound together this terrible group, which could not betray its dissension but in falling altogether.

Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois charged themselves with kindling the public spirit, through the correspondence of the committee with the agents of the republic in the departments. St. Just arrogated to himself the empire of established theories as vague and as absolute as his imperturbable metaphysics. Couthon took the surveillance of the police, in conformity with his scrutinising and sombre mind. The exterior relations devolved upon Hérault de Séchelles, who was secretly inspired by the European genius of Danton. Robert Lindet had the commissariat; a vital question at the moment when famine was in the towns, and disorganised armies; Jean-Bon-St.-André, the marine; Prieur, the material administration of the war; and Carnot the supreme military direction—the plans of campaigns, the inspiration of the generals, the criticism and correction of their faults, the preparation of victories, and the reparation of reverses. It was the armed genius of the country defending the frontiers during the convulsion of the heart and the exhaustion of the veins of France. Prieur (de la Côte-d'Or) assisted Carnot in the details. Fifteen hours' work every day, his mind on the stretch over all the maps and all the positions of our campaigns, animated, but did not overwhelm the organising genius of Carnot. He carried into council the *sang froid* and the fire of the field of battle. He had the gift of choosing men, and his hand marked out their future fame. Pichegru, Hoche, Moreau, Jourdan, Desaix, Marceau, Bonne, Bonaparte, and Kléber were amongst so many future heroes, lights of his discernment.

Barrère, a pliant, prompt, and literary spirit, digested the deliberations of the committee, and rendered the reports to the Convention in brief and effective terms. He had the colouring of events. He uttered from the height of the tribune words prepared for the people. And, lastly, Robespierre presided over all questions, save that of war. He was the politician of the committee. He designed the end and the road; the others propelled the machine. Robespierre moved not the wheels. His attribute was — Thought.

The debates were determined by the majority of council. The signature of three members, nevertheless, sufficed to render measures executive. These signatures of confidence were lent and bestowed too cruelly at a later period amongst these colleagues, and often without examination. The precipitation of a committee which determined even five hundred matters in the course of the day, encouraged these facilities without justifying them. Many heads fell through these fatal facilities of the pen. Profound secrecy was observed. No one knew who had sued for, or who had refused such and such a life. The responsibility of each member merged into the general responsibility. All adopted every thing, even though all had not consented. These men had yielded even their reputation. And, marvellous to say, there was no president. In a chief, the appearance of a master was dreaded. An anonymous dictatorship was desired. The committee did not suffer from this want of a head. All were members — all were heads — the republic presided.

XXI. While the Committee of Public Safety, thus transformed into an executive council, possessed itself of the government, the Convention called the envoys of the primary assemblies, the bearers of the votes of the whole people who sanctioned the new constitution, to Paris. These envoys arrived there to the number of eight thousand. The painter David conceived the *fête* which assimilated, in a like popular solemnity on the Champ-de-Mars, the anniversary of the 10th of August and the acceptation of the constitution. David was inspired by Robespierre. Nature, reason, creed, country—were the only divinities who presided at this regeneration of the social world. The people were there the only majesty. Symbols and allegories were the sole objects of adoration. Soul was wanting there because God was absent. Robespierre dared not yet unveil his image. The place of union and the point of departure of the *cortége*, as in all the *fêtes* of the Revolution, was the site of the Bastille, marked as the first step of the Republic. The authorities of Paris, the members of the Commune, the envoys of the primary assemblies, the Cordeliers, the Jacobins, the fraternal societies of women, the people *en masse*, and the Convention, in short, assembled there at sunrise. Upon the ground of the Bastille a fountain, called the Fountain of Regeneration, washed away the traces of former servitude. A colossal statue of Nature, whose breasts poured forth water, presided over this fountain. Hérault de Séchelles, president of the Convention, received the water in a cup of gold, raised it to his lips, and transmitted it to the most aged of the citizens. "I am on the verge of the tomb," exclaimed the old man, "but I think I shall be born anew with the regenerated human race." The cup circulated from hand to hand amongst all the assistants. The *cortége* defiled, to the sound of cannon, upon the Boulevards.

Each society raised its flag, each section its symbol. The members of the Convention advanced last, each one holding in the hand a bouquet of flowers, fruit, and fresh ears of corn. The tables on which the rights of man were written, and the ark in which the constitution was enclosed, were carried as holy relics into the midst of the Convention, by eight of its members. Eighty-six envoys of the primary assemblies, representing the eighty-six departments, walked round the members of the Convention, and unrolled from one hand to the other, around the national representation, a long tricoloured ribbon, which seemed to enchain the deputies in the bonds of the country. A national *fascis*, crowned with olive branches, exemplified the reconciliation and the unity of the members of the republic. The foundlings in their cradles, the deaf and dumb conversing in the language of signs which science had given them; the ashes of heroes who had died for their country, enclosed in urns, whereon their names were inscribed; a triumphal car, surrounded by the labourer, his wife and his children; and, lastly, tumbrils loaded, as if they were vile spoils, with fragments of tiaras, sceptres, crowns, and broken arms — all these symbols of slavery, superstition, pride, benevolence, labour, glory, innocence, rural life, and warlike virtue marched behind the representatives. Close by a station before les Invalides, where the multitude saluted their own image in a colossal statue of the people trampling on federalism, the crowd dispersed itself over the Champ-de-Mars. The representatives and established corps ranged themselves upon the steps of the altar of the country. A million of heads bristled upon the sloping steps of this immense amphitheatre; a million of voices swore to defend the principles of the social code, presented by Hérault de Sechelles to the acceptation of the republic. The salvos of cannon seemed themselves to swear extermination to the foes of the country.

XXII. Public instinct, however, only accepted the constitution as a future matter. Every one felt that its execution should be adjourned until the pacification of the empire. Liberty, according to La Montagne, was an arm which the Revolution should have restored to its enemies, and which at this moment would have served to undermine liberty itself. No regular constitution could fulfil its duties in the hands of enemies of every democratic constitution. A petition from the envoys of the departments urged the Convention to continue the government alone. Peril called for arbitrary measures. Pache re-assembled the Commune, and caused the *rappel* to be beaten in all the sections. An address, drawn up by Robespierre, was carried by thousands of citizens to the Convention, to conjure them to retain the supreme power. This dialogue of a thousand voices of the people and its representatives, was accompanied by sound of drums and the voice of the tocsin. It was evident that the Jacobins exercised the influence of the people over the Convention to make it give birth to terror. "Legislators," said they in the address, "elevate yourselves to the height of the great destiny of France. The French people are themselves above their perils. We have pointed out to you the sublime step of a general appeal to the people; you have only acquired the first rank. Half measures are always mortal in extreme danger. It is easier to move a whole nation than a part of it. If you required one hundred thousand men, perhaps you would not find them; if you demand millions of republicans, you will see them arise to crush the enemies of liberty! The people no longer desire a war of tactics, where traitorous and perfidious generals sell the blood of the citizens. Ordain a fixed hour when the tocsin of liberty shall sound throughout the republic. Let no one be exempted; let agriculture alone reserve the arms necessary for the sowing of the earth and the reaping of the harvest; let the course of things be interrupted; let the grand and only business of the French be to save the republic; let the means of execution not disquiet you — only decree the principle! We will present to the Committee of Public Safety the means of making the national thunder burst upon all tyrants and all slaves!"

XXIII. This subterfuge of the Jacobins was transparent. The real meaning was terror, the revolutionary tribunal, and death. The Committee of Public Safety blushed at the insufficiency of its measures in defence of the frontiers. It withdrew into its office, and reported, while holding its sitting, the project of a new decree which raised all France. "The generals," said Barrère, in his report, "have until now not known the true national temperament. The irruption, the sudden attack, the inundation of an excited people, drowning in its tumultuous waves hordes of enemies, and overthrowing the dykes of despotism — such is the image of a war of liberty. The Romans were tacticians — they conquered an enslaved world; the free Gauls, without other tactics than their impetuosity — destroyed the Roman empire.

"It is thus that the impetuosity of the French shall level with the dust this colossus of coalition. When a great people desires to be free, they are so, provided their territory furnishes them metal wherewith to forge arms." The Convention arose in enthusiasm, as an example of representatives to citizens, and voted the following decree : —

XXIV. "From this moment and until the day when the enemy shall have been driven from the territory of the republic, all the French are in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men will go to battle, the married men will forge arms and transport provisions, the women will make tents and clothes, and will serve in the hospitals ; the children will make lint to dress the wounded; the old men will cause themselves to be carried to the public places, to excite the courage of the warriors, the hatred of kings, and the love of the republic. The national buildings will be converted into barracks, the public places into armouries. The soil of the cellars will be lyed to extract saltpetre from it. Arms of calibre will be exclusively confided to those who march against the enemy. Fowling pieces and naked weapons will be bestowed upon the public force in the interior. Saddle-horses will be required to complete the corps of cavalry. All draught-horses, which are not required for agriculture, will conduct the artillery and provisions. The Committee of Public Safety is charged to originate every thing, to organise every thing, to require all throughout the republic, men and material, for the execution of these measure. The representatives of the people, who are sent into their respective circuits, are invested with absolute powers for this object. The levy will be general. Those citizens who are unmarried, or widowers without children, will march first. They will repair to the principal place in their district, and will there be exercised in the use of arms, until their departure for the armies. The banner of each organised battalion shall bear this inscription : '*Le peuple Français debout contre les tyrans !*'"

These measures, very far from alarming the generality of France, were received by patriots with the enthusiasm which had inspired them. Battalions were raised with more celerity and regularity than in 1792. On registering the lists of the first officers who were named, all the heroic names of the military empire of France were there to be found. They sprung from the republic. The glory with which despotism armed itself at a later period against liberty, belonged entirely to the Revolution.

XXV. These decrees were completed in the space of two months by others impressed with the same defensive energy. It was the organisation of the enthusiasm and the despair of a people who knew how to die, and of a cause which must triumph. France was at the Thermopylæ of the Revolution, but this Thermopylæ was as extended as the frontiers of the republic, and the combatants consisted of twenty-eight millions of men.

The Commission of Finance, through Cambon, its reporter and its oracle, ruled with an honest and healing hand over the disorder of the bankrupt treasury, and over the chaos into which the mass and the discredit of the assignats had thrown private and public affairs. There were in circulation about four thousand millions of francs, of valueless assignats. On one hand, the loan forced upon the rich, equivalent to nearly one year's revenue—a light tax to save the capital by saving the country,—caused one thousand millions of assignats to come into the hands of government. Cambon burned them as he received them. On the other hand, the mass of taxes in arrear amounted almost to a thousand millions. Cambon absorbed them at a nominal price in the cash of the state. The sum of paper money thus was reduced to two thousand millions. To raise these assignats in public opinion, Cambon abolished all companies who produced *actions*, to the end that the assignat should become the only national *action* in circulation. Capitalists were prohibited from investing their funds otherwise than in the French banks. The commerce of gold and silver was interdicted, on pain of death. These metals were reserved, from urgent economy, for the use of the mint. To increase the quantity of ready money requisite for the small daily transactions of the people, the bells of the churches were cast, and the sacred metal was thrown to the people struck into coin of the republic.

Cambon furthermore sounded the gulf of the debt of the state towards individuals. The word bankrupt might have filled up this gulf, but it would have choked it with spoil, with debt, and with tears. Cambon desired that probity, the virtue of citizens amongst themselves, should be above all the virtue of the republic towards its creditors. He executed a measure of equity. He took possession of all the claims, he valued them, he amalgamated them under one general and uniform title, which he called the Ledger of the National Debt. Each creditor was inscribed in this ledger, for a sum equivalent to that which the state acknowledged to owe him. The state paid the interest of this recognised sum at five per cent.

This stock, which was freely bought and sold, thus became a real capital in the hands of the creditors of the state. The state could redeem itself, should the stock in commerce fall below par, that is to say, in regard to the interest of the capital at five per cent. This operation would exempt the state without oppression and without injustice. As to the capital, that was never to be reimbursed. The government acknowledged itself the debtor of a perpetual interest, and not of a capital. The perpetual rent had moreover this political advantage of combining the interest of the masses of the citizens with the fortune of the state, and of republicanising the creditors by their interest. In short, it created a fruitful germ of public credit, even in the ruin of private fortune. The public prosperity of France still at this day rests upon the basis instituted by Cambon.

XXVI. The unity of weights and measures; the application of the discovery of balloons to military operations; the establishment of telegraphic lines to bear the hand of government, as promptly as its thoughts, to the extremities of the republic; the formation of national museums to excite by example the taste and cultivation of the arts; the creation of an uniform civil code for all parts of France, to the end that justice should there be as one with the country; in short, public education, that second nature of civilised people, were the objects of the many discussions and decrees which attested to the world that the republic had faith in itself, and founded a future, by disputing the morrow with its enemies.

Equality of education was proclaimed, as a principle flowing from the rights of man. To give two souls to the people was to create two people into one, and to make helots and aristocrats of intelligence. On the other hand, to compel all the children of fortune, of different religions and conditions, to receive the same education in the national establishments, was to falsify all social order, to confound all professions, and to violate all family freedom.

Robespierre desired, and was bound to desire, this forced education, in the radically balanced logic of his ideas, wherein family, condition, profession, and fortune disappeared but to give place to two unities — the country and man. The uniform tyranny of the design of the state ought, in his principles, to precede uniform justice and equality amongst its children. The Convention decreed national establishments of public education, which all the youths of the country should be compelled to frequent; but it permitted families the right of retaining their children under the paternal roof; thus bestowing instruction upon the state, education to the fathers, heart to the family, and soul to the country.

XXVII. From decrees of violence, vengeance, and sacrilege, sprung these decrees of power, wisdom, and magnanimity. The menacing movements of the people of Paris, who were beset with the reality of famine and the phantom of monopoly, the ravings of Chaumette and Hébert in the Commune, compelled the Convention to make deplorable concessions, which resembled zeal, but which were only weakness. In requiring from the people all their energy, the Convention considered itself also obliged to put up with all their transports. It was not as yet strong enough to govern its own force. The Convention decreed a maximum — that is to say, an arbitrary price — below which no bread, meat, fish, salt, wine, coals, wood, soap, oil, sugar, iron, hides, tobacco, and stuffs could be sold. It fixed likewise the maximum of wages. It was making itself master of all the liberty in commercial transactions, in speculation and labour, which exist only in a state of liberty. It was placing the hand of the state amongst all sellers, all purchasers, all labourers, and all proprietors of the republic. Such a law could not but produce the concealment of capital, the cessation of work, the languor of all circulation, and the ruin of all. It is the nature of circumstances which fixes the price of provisions of the first necessity; it is not the law. To order the husbandman to give his corn, and the baker to give his bread, below the price that these provisions cost them, would be to command the one to sow no more, and the other no longer to knead.

XXVIII. The maximum brought forth its fruit by compressing in every direction the circulation of ready money, labour, and provisions. The people laid the blame of these calamities of nature upon the rich, upon the merchants, and upon the counter-revolutionists. They pursued the counter-revolution, even to its most impotent victims, buried in the dungeons of the Temple, and the remains of its kings interred in the tombs of Saint Denis. The Convention decreed, "that the process against the queen Marie Antoinette should be acted upon; that the royalist tombs of Saint Denis should be destroyed, and the ashes of the kings swept from the temple which the superstition of royalty had consecrated to them." These concessions were not enough for the people. They demanded loudly a zealous tribunal respecting property or pillage. "If you do not give us justice on the rich," exclaimed an orator in the Jacobins, "we will take it ourselves."

The addresses of the societies of the departments also demanded an institution which should restrain the force of the people, and regulate their violence, in the shape of a perambulating army, charged with the execution of its will. This was the revolutionary army, to wit, a corps of popular pretorians, composed of veterans of the insurrection, hardened against tears, blood, and punishment, and parading throughout the whole republic the instrument of death and terror.

Crowds of workmen, of beggars, and women, vociferating death or bread, collected round the Hôtel-de-Ville, and threatened the alarmed Convention with a new 31st of May.

Hébert and Chaumette encouraged these assemblages. Robespierre, one while appeared indignant at this excess of anarchy, which proceeded to annihilate the Revolution by revolution itself; at another, feigned to comprehend it, to pardon it, and himself to instigate, in order yet to rule it. "The people are alarmed by persuading them that provisions will fail them," said he to the Jacobins. "The desire seems to be, to arm them against themselves, to carry them to the prisons, there to murder the prisoners, well assured that means would there be found to allow the wretches to escape who are detained there; and to allow the innocent or the patriot, whom error might have conducted there, to perish. At the moment when I speak to you, I am assured that

Pache is himself besieged by some wretches who abuse, insult, and threaten him!"

The embarrassment of Robespierre was visible in these words, yielding with one hand, to grasp with the other the errors of the people who led him. He had not, with complacency counted, like Marat, the number of heads to be laid low by the steel, to arrive at this result. He would have wished to have been able to abstain from death in his work of regeneration; but he accepted even that as a last necessity.

XXIX. Robespierre in vain essayed many times to restrain these petitioners, thirsty for pillage and blood. His popularity, with difficulty, survived his resistance to excess. He often entered alone and forsaken into his dwelling.

Pache came one night to confer secretly with him upon the means of calming these ebullitions. "It is done;" said Robespierre to Pache; "it is all over with the Revolution, if it be abandoned to these fools. The people must be defended by terrible institutions, or they will tear themselves to pieces with the arms with which they think to defend themselves. The Convention has but one method of wresting the blade from them; that is, to take it itself, and strike its enemies without pity." He was indignant at Chaumette, Hébert, Varlet, and Vincent, who fomented these commotions of the multitude. "Do not permit," said he to Pache, "these children of the Revolution to sport with the thunder of the people: let us direct it ourselves, or it will burst and destroy us." Pache went, however, to the sitting of the 5th of September, to present there the pretended claim of Paris. He charged Chaumette with the reading of the petition, thereby leaving to the solicitor of the Commune the responsibility of an act to which he was himself visibly opposed. "Citizens," said Chaumette, "they desire to starve us. They wish to compel the people to exchange with shame their sovereignty for a morsel of bread. New aristocrats, no less cruel, no less covetous, no less insolent than the old ones, have raised themselves upon the ruins of feudalism. They calculate with an atrocious indifference how much they may derive from a famine, an insurrection, and a massacre. Where is the arm which shall turn your weapons against the breasts of these traitors? Where is the hand to strike these guilty heads? Your enemies must be destroyed, or they will destroy you. They have defied the people; the people this day accept the defiance. The mass of the people will crush them in the end! And you, Montagne, for ever celebrated in the pages of history, be you the Sinai of the French! Hurl the decrees of the justice and the will of the people in the midst of thunder! Holy Montagne! become a volcano, whose lava shall devour our enemies! No more quarter! No more mercy for traitors! Let us place between them and us the barrier of eternity! We demand of you, in the name of the people of Paris assembled yesterday upon the public place, the formation of a revolutionary army. Let this be followed up by an incorruptible tribunal, and the instrument of death, which cuts off at one blow the conspiracies with the lives of the traitors."

XXX. Each of these apostrophes of Chaumette was interrupted by the applause of La Montagne and of the tribunes. The propositions of the orator, summed up into motions by Moïse Bayle, were unanimously voted. The deputation of Jacobins, excited in the evening by Royer, spoke afterwards. "Impunity emboldens our enemies," said they. "The people are discouraged by seeing the most guilty escape their vengeance. Brissot still breathes — that monster vomited forth by England to disturb and shackle the Revolution. Let him be judged, he and his accomplices. The people are also indignant at seeing privileged persons in the midst of the republic. Why, Vergniaud, Gensonné, and other wretches, degraded by their treason from the dignity of representatives, would have a palace for a prison, while the poor *sans culottes* groan in their dungeons under the poignards of the federalists! It is time that equality should direct its scythe over all heads; it is time to terrify all the conspirators! Well, then, legislators, let terror be the order of the day!"

At these words, as at a revelation of public fury, applause shook the hall. "Let us be in a state of revolution, since the counter-revolution is everywhere plotted by our enemies." ("Yes, yes," replied La Montagne, rising.) "Let the steel level all guilty heads! Institute a revolutionary army; institute a tribunal of terror as its attendant; let the instrument of the law's vengeance accompany it! Banish all the nobles, imprison them until the peace; that blood-thirsty race shall henceforth see no blood flow but their own!"

The president announced, in his answer, that the Convention had already anticipated the demands of the people and of the Jacobins, and that it was about to fulfil them.

XXXI. Barrère, who was cautioned by Robespierre and prepared for the evening, ascended the tribune, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, to demand the origination of terror, and to regulate it when decreed. "For some time past," said he, "the aristocrats of the interior have meditated a movement. Well, they shall have this motion; but it shall be against themselves. They shall have it organised, and regulated by a revolutionary army, which will, in short, execute that great motto which we owe to the Commune of Paris. Let us institute terror as the order of the day. The royalists desire blood: well, they will have that of the conspirators, of Brissot, of Marie Antoinette! This is no longer illegal vengeance, it proceeds from extraordinary tribunals, which have wrought it. You will not be astonished at the means which we shall present to you, when you know that from the depth of their prisons these malefactors still conspire, and that they are the rallying point of our enemies. If you desire to annihilate La Montagne, well! La Montagne will crush you."

The decree which these words summed up, was carried by acclamation in these terms: — "There shall be in Paris an armed force of six thousand men, and twelve hundred artillery, destined to restrain the counter-revolutionists, and to execute every where the revolutionary laws, and the measures of public safety decreed by the National Convention. This army shall be organised during the day."

A second decree banished all those who had belonged to the military establishment of the king or his brothers to a distance of twenty leagues from Paris.

A third ordained that Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Clavière, Lebrun, and Baudry, the secretary of Lebrun, should be immediately delivered to the revolutionary tribunal.

A fourth re-established nocturnal visits in the dwellings of the citizens.

A fifth ordered the transportation of common women, who corrupted the manners and enervated the republicanism of the young citizens, beyond sea.

A sixth voted a payment of two francs per day to those workmen who left their workshops to assist in the assemblies of their section; and of three francs per day to the men of the people who should be members of the revolutionary committees. It fixed two sittings per week, the Sunday and the Thursday, for these patriotic assemblies. The sittings were to commence at five o'clock and to finish at ten.

Lastly, a seventh reorganised the revolutionary tribunal. It was the justice of terror.

This tribunal, instituted by the vengeance of the morrow of the 10th of August, had been until then tempered by the forms and humanity of the Girondists. In two years, it had only tried one hundred accused, and had acquitted the greater number of them. The installation of this tribunal of state recalled by its forms, that the people took all power into their own hands, even justice; and that they were to sit themselves, and judge their enemies by means of juries composed of simple citizens chosen from and elected by the crowd.

XXXII. This decree of the reorganisation of the revolutionary tribunal was hardly carried when the Convention named the judges and juries. The judges were men chosen by the Jacobins, from their ultra principles and inflexibility of heart; the juries from men of blind patriotism and of voluntary compliance with the passion which employed them. Party spirit constituted all their justice. They believed themselves honest in not refusing any head, and incorruptible in interdicting themselves from all pity.

Possessed by one principle, the grandeur of the cause and the interest of the people removed crime from them, and only showed them the result.

Death, according to them, was necessary in the dawn of the Revolution. They consented to act the part of death. Such men are found throughout all history: as wood, iron, and fire are found to construct an instrument of punishment, so are judges found to condemn the vanquished,—satellites to pursue the victims,—and executioners to immolate them.

XXXIII. These judges were, Hermann, president of the tribunal of the Pas-de-Calais; Sellier, judge at Paris; Dumas, of Louis le Saulnier; Brulé, Coffinhal, Foucault, Bravetz, of the Hautes Alpes; Deliége, Subleyras, of the

South; Lefetz, of Arras; Verteuil, Lanne, of Saint Pol in Picardy; Ragmey, of the Jura; Masson, Denizot, Harny, a literary man; David, of Lille; Maire, Trinchard, and Leclerc. Almost all barristers, lawyers, or underlings, accustomed to those legal subtleties that harden the heart, and the formalities that stifle conscience. The jury was formed of citizens of Paris or the departments, chosen from the inferior class of artisans, possessing no other guide than their instinct, or claim than their devotion; they were selected for their ignorance, as that ensured their obedience.

The Convention then appointed Ronsin general-in-chief of the revolutionary army. Since the massacres of Meux, in which Ronsin took part, his name possessed the *prestige* of terror and blood. Ronsin, the *protégé* of Danton and the friend of Chaumette and Hébert, had gained every step in rank amidst the insurrections of Paris. Ardently desiring glory, he had at first sought it in literary pursuits, and then in the deepest abysses of demagogism, casting aside the pen for the sword. He recruited the revolutionary army amongst all the disorderly horde of bandits that filled Paris.

When the army was organised and the tribunal composed, there yet remained to point out and legally to hand over to them the guilty. A great accusatory law,—universal as the republic, arbitrary as the dictatorship, and vague as suspicion,—was, according to the Montagne, necessary to the omnipotence of the Convention.

The Jacobins loudly demanded the adoption of this measure against those men who, without being absolutely guilty, yet gave the republic cause for uneasiness. Danton and Robespierre wished that the very fury and injustice of the people should be moderated and controlled.

XXXIV. Merlin de Douai presented on the 17th of September, a project of a decree whose meshes, woven by the hand of an able lawyer, enveloped the whole of France in a legal net, which left no resource to innocence, nothing free from treachery. Merlin de Douai was one of those erudite legislators, who, without really sharing in the blind fury of passions in troublous times, place calmness and knowledge at the service of the reigning ideas. The secret intentions of Merlin in presenting this decree were, it is said, rather to shield the victims from the people than to surrender the guilty to the revolutionary tribunal. Such was the state of the times, that the prison seemed to him the only refuge from assassination.

The decree of Merlin, composed of seventy-four incriminations, arising from all the suspicions that lurked in every man's brain, became the most complete arsenal of arbitrary rule that the complaisance of a legislator placed in the hands of power.

The first article was, "Immediately after the publication of this present decree, all suspected persons who are found in the territory of the republic, and who are still at liberty, shall be arrested.

"Are deemed suspected,—those who by their conduct, writings, or language, have proved themselves partisans of tyranny and federalism, and enemies of liberty.

"Those who cannot prove they possess the means of existence, and that they have accomplished their civic duties.

"Those to whom certificates of citizenship have been refused.

"Those of the *ci-devant* nobles, fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, sisters, husbands, wives, and agents of emigrants who have not constantly manifested their attachment to the revolution."

"Suspected," added Barrère:—"The nobles suspected; the courtiers, the lawyers, suspected; the priests, suspected; the bankers, the strangers, the speculators, suspected; those who lament what the revolution has achieved, suspected; those who grieve at our success."

A last article, supplying all omissions, extended this decree even to those who had been declared not guilty, and authorised the tribunals to detain in prison those whose innocence they had declared, and whose acquittal they had pronounced.

XXXV. The prisons were not sufficient to contain the immense number of prisoners, and the public edifices, the confiscated hotels, the churches and convents, were converted into places of confinement. The punishment of death, multiplied in proportion to this multiplication of crimes, came from hour to hour, and decree to decree, to arm the judges with the right of decimating the suspected. Did any one refuse to march to the frontier, or surrender his arms to those on their way thither — Death. Did any one shelter an emigrant or fugitive—Death. Did any one transmit money to a son or friend beyond the frontier — Death. Was an innocent correspondence maintained with an exile, or a single letter received — Death. Did any one aid prisoners to communicate with their friends — Death. Was the value of *assignats* diminished — Death. Were they purchased at a premium — Death. Did two witnesses attest that a priest or a noble had taken part in an anti-revolutionary meeting — Death. Did a prisoner endeavour to burst his bonds and escape — Death pursued the very instinct of life. Death was soon suspended over the heads of even the judges. A decree, dated a few days later, ordered the dismissal, imprisonment, and trial of such revolutionary committees as had left a single suspected person at liberty.

XXXVI. Thus a law which would not recognise the innocence of those whom it wished to consider guilty; suspicion converted into proof; treachery held up as a duty; a revolutionary tribunal to apply this code; a revolutionary army to control Paris, and conduct the suspected to prison, and the accused to trial; the guillotine erected in all the principal towns, and borne about in the smaller; commissioners of the Convention, appointed by the Committee of Public Safety, sharing the provinces and the armies, and every where watching, accelerating or moderating the terrible working of the dictatorship. The Convention, deliberating and acting, — present every where in its emissaries, maintaining an incessant correspondence with them, inspiring, stimulating, punishing, and recalling them, — such was the terrible mechanism of that dictatorship which succeeded the hesitations and commotions of the government after the fall of the Gironde, and which is called *the Terror*. Irresistible and atrocious as the despair of a revolution which feels its aim frustrated, and of a nation which feels itself perishing, this dictatorship makes us tremble with astonishment, and shudder with horror. This government of an extreme crisis cannot be judged by the rules applicable to ordinary governments. It termed itself revolutionary government; that is, subversion, strife, tyranny. The Convention considered itself as the garrison of France, shut up in a nation in a state of siege. Resolved to save the revolution and the country, or perish in their ruins, it suspended all laws before that of the common danger. It created the dominion of public safety against itself and its enemies; or rather, it created a revolutionary machine, sprung from, superior to, and stronger than itself; thus voluntarily submitting to be ruled, humbled, and decimated by the tyranny of its own constructing.

The Convention did not do this merely through that brutal impulse that leads men to recognise as just and legal that passion alone which fanaticises them for an idea, or that fury with which they are animated against their enemies, but also from policy. The Convention was in the presence of a double danger, which it did not conceal from itself,—civil contentions, and foreign war,—and felt that it would soon be a sport of the caprices of the Commune, and the seditious movements of the populace of Paris agitated by the subaltern demagogues, if it did not accept from these very demagogues the arm of the terror which they offered to-day, and which it would suspend on the morrow over their own heads. Neither Danton, Robespierre, nor their enlightened colleagues wished to surrender the Convention to the mercy and derision of the first factious member of the Commune, who would dictate laws to it, as on the 10th of March, and the 31st of May. The nearer these men had been in contact with sedition whilst serving their principles, or their fortunes, the more they knew its fury, and the more they dreaded its struggles, now that they sought to establish the republic. Robespierre did not picture to himself, as the realisation of his dreams, a turbulent and furious populace; but the calm and regular reign of a people personified in its representatives. Danton did not picture to himself, as the realisation of his dreams, the permanent agitation of the capital, but the solid and irresistible government of a national republic. They both felt that the Revolution, concentrated at Paris, and torn by contending factions, would soon perish. They wished to ensure respect for the national representation, and to dominate by a legal terror that popular terror which had so often made the representative power tremble. They needed the revolutionary terror, to intimidate and curb the Revolution. They needed it to urge the masses to the frontiers, against Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon, and La Vendée, to impose on the armies, by discipline; on the generals, by victory; on Europe, by stupor; on all, by the sinister *prestige* of the Convention, and to extort from the nation by fear those supernatural efforts of taxes, armaments, levies *en masse*, which they could no longer extort from its discouraged patriotism. The *terror* was invented by Robespierre and Danton, less against the internal enemies of the republic, than against the excesses and anarchies of the Revolution herself.

At the moment when the Convention organised it, the royalists and aristocrats no longer gave any one cause for alarm. The Terror could not reach the emigrants and Vendéeans, who had taken up arms; on the contrary, it would only serve to render them more irreconcilable with a republic which only offered them a scaffold. The emigrants and Vendéeans were the pretext, the anarchists the real objects; and the scaffold, which they so loudly demanded, was principally erected for themselves.

XXXVII. Moreover, the Terror was not a calm and cruel calculation of a few men, deliberating coldly on a system of government. It sprang by degrees from circumstances and the tension of things and men, placed in difficult positions, from which their genius furnished them with no other means of extricating themselves than by destruction and death. It arose chiefly from that fatal and ambitious rivalry, that struggle for proofs of patriotism, for popularity, of which each man and party reproached his or their opponents with not offering sufficient to the revolution;—with which Barnave reproached Mirabeau; Brissot, Barnave; Robespierre, Brissot; Danton, Robespierre; Marat, Danton; Hébert, Marat; every one the Girondists: so that to prove his patriotism, every man and party were forced to exaggerate their proofs by exaggerating measures, suspicions, excesses, and crimes; until from this pressure, which all men exercised against each other, there should result a general emulation—half feigned, half sincere—which should envelope them in the mutual dread they communicated, and which they cast on their enemies to avert from themselves.

XXXVIII. And in the people themselves the convulsive agitation of a revolution of three years' duration, the dread of losing a conquest they valued the more from its being the more recent and more contested; the incessant fever which the tribunes, the journals, and the clubs disseminated each day amongst the populace; the cessation of labour, the prospects of the agrarian law, and general pillage by those greedy of gain, despairing patriotism, the treason of the generals, the invasion of the frontiers, the Vendéeans setting up the standard of royalism and religion, the scarcity of money, the famine panic, the thirst of blood inspired by the days of the 14th of July, 6th of October, 10th of August, the 2nd of September, and that furious rage for extermination, which lurks in the instincts of the multitude, which awakes in time of great commotion, and which demands to gorge itself with blood when it has once tasted it,—such were the elements of the *Terror*. Calculation in some, *entraînement* in others; weakness in these, concession in those; fear and passion in the greater number; a moral epidemic tainting an already vitiated air, and from which predisposed minds no more escape than morbid bodies from a prevailing disease; a contagion to which every one lends his share of miasma and complicity; the *Terror* sprang from itself, and died as it was born, when the tension of affairs was relaxed, without being conscious of its death, any more than it was conscious of its birth. Such is the progress of human things, for which our infirmity leads us to seek one cause, when it results from a thousand different and complicated causes; and to which is given the name of one man, when they should bear the name of the period.

XXXIX. Could the Convention altogether discard the necessity of an arbitrary and dictatorial government, armed with powerful intimidation, under the circumstances in which the republic—France—and even itself was placed? Whatsoever may be the reply which the philosopher or jurist may make to himself, the statesman cannot for a moment hesitate. Without a concentrated and exclusive government, the Revolution must have inevitably perished beneath anarchy within, and the counter-revolution without.

The coalition of crowned heads watched every movement of France, and encircled it with 700,000 men. The *emigrés* were advancing at the head of foreigners, and already fraternised with Royalism in Valenciennes and Condé. La Vendée had roused the whole of the West, and with one hand united its religious rising with the insurrection in Normandy, and with the other joined the insurrection in the south. Marseilles had unfurled the flag of federalism, scarcely yet defeated in Paris. Toulon and the fleet were plotting their defection, and opening their roadsteads and arsenals to the English. Lyons, declaring itself a sovereign municipality, cast into prison the representatives of the people, and erected its guillotine for the partisans of the Convention.

The Commune of Paris, elated at its recent triumph, affected, in the face of the national representation, the moderation of strength, maintaining however an attitude which bespoke menace rather than respect. Pache, Hébert, Chaumette, Ronsin, Vincent, Leclerc, Jacques Roux, the friends and *contumateurs* of Marat, the Cordéliers, had not disunited the gatherings of 31st May, and declaimed fiercely against the supineness of Danton, the weakness of Robespierre, and the procrastination of the Committee of Public Safety. Proud of having already decimated the Convention, they openly declared their intention of again decimating it, and imperiously demanded of the Convention measures against customs, worship, property, and commerce, which it was impossible for that body to grant without utterly reversing every element of social order. Clubs, revolutionary committees, assemblies in sections, the public squares, the faubourgs, the journalists, echoed these doctrines, and offered their aid to render the representatives compliant. The people only talked of doing justice to itself, and of renewing and even of surpassing the assassinations of September. How could a political body, in the midst of such a tempest, unable either to negotiate with Europe, to pacify the insurrections of the interior, or to defend itself in Paris by the law which had been snapped asunder in its hands, maintain and save with itself the republic and the country, by the mere abstract power of a constitution which no longer existed,—and unless it were surrounded by a *prestige*, omnipotence, and that amount of force and active power equally intimidating to its friends and enemies?

XL. The dictatorship of the Convention was not altogether an usurpation; for the Convention was, in fact, the Revolution concentrated in Paris, and the Revolution was

France. France and the Revolution had at this moment no national government but the Convention. The Convention possessed then, accordingly, all the rights of the Revolution and of France. The first of these rights was to save itself and still exist. The sole law at such a moment was an universal *beyond the law* (*hors la loi*), which suppressed all plots, put down every attempt at resistance, crushed all faction, and laid hands, by an exercise of promptitude aided by the general stupor, on a power which was wanting to all and to every thing, and without which all must have perished. This power Robespierre, Danton, and the Mountain had the daring to seek and to find in the very bosom of anarchy itself. The Convention had the energy and the misfortune to associate itself with their enterprise, and to take upon itself an eternal responsibility. By giving power to the dictatorship it believed it was forging an indispensable weapon for the safety of liberty; but the weapon of tyranny is too heavy for the hands of man. Instead of threatening with care and selection, it struck at random without justice or remorse. The weapon overpowered the hand. This was its crime; and to this day liberty expiates that crime.

Thus did it reason: "Idea's have a right to burst forth; truths the right to struggle: revolutions, which comprise these ideas and these truths, have a right to defend themselves and to triumph. Does the Convention represent the Revolution? Yes. Has it the right to save it? Yes. Does the safety of such revolutionary idea and truth require a dictatorship of the National Assembly, as legitimate and omnipotent as the nation itself? Yes. Is the national—the sovereign will, the law of the moment? Yes. Do circumstances require, even under pain of death, that this law be effectual against all factions—intimidating, irresistible, and consequently exclusive? Yes, decidedly.

Such government, conjoined intimately with the Convention, was consequently inevitable at the moment when it was formed. To make temporary, secure, and impartial laws, and enforce their penalty, is the right of every dictatorship; to proscribe and kill, against all laws and against all justice, to inundate scaffolds with blood, to deliver not the accused to the tribunals, but victims to the executioner, to command verdicts instead of awaiting them, to give to citizens their enemies as judges, to encourage informers, to throw to assassins the spoils of the sufferers, to imprison and immolate on mere suspicion, to pervert into crime the feelings of nature, to confound ages, sex, old people, children, wives, mothers, daughters in the crimes of fathers, hubands, brothers,—is, not dictatorship but proscription. Such was the two-fold character of the Terror. By the one the Convention will remain as a monument in the breach of a country saved—a Revolution defended; by the other its memory will be stained with blood, which history will perpetually stir without ever being able to efface from its name.

# BOOK XLVI.

I. One of the first great victims of the Terror was General Custine. His crime was having mingled science with war. The Montagnards desired a rapid and cursory campaign; they required plebeian generals to direct the plebeian masses, and ignorant generals to invent modern warfare.

We have seen how Custine, carried away from the midst of his army, by whom he was adored, by the commissary of the Convention, Levasseur, had arrived in Paris to render an account of his inactivity. The immense popularity which had attached to him from his first invasions into the heart of Germany, and the taking of Mayence, still surrounded him. The officers admired him—the soldiers loved him. A sort of soldier-like coquetry, concealing adulation under asperity,—a severity of discipline which was rigorous, and relaxed at the proper moment,—a natural eloquence, manners at once free and martial,—a large fortune generously expended in the camp,—an aristocratic name, to which democracy itself yielded *prestige*,—opinions which were thought to incline towards the Girondists,—in short, the secret favour of the royalists, who fondly suspected his inmost thoughts of leaning to monarchy, every thing concurred to spread around Custine the interest which attaches itself to glory, to hope, and to persecution. His presence in Paris had revived all these sentiments: the enthusiasm and the applause excited by his appearance in public places, in the promenades, and in the theatres, made the Convention fear that in calling a man, accused, to Paris, it had only called a master: and that the obedient general might be induced to act the part of Cromwell. It hastened to arrest him, and to deliver him to the judges. It was not at the moment when it desired to possess itself of every power, that it was willing to recognise in the army any popularity but its own; and to spare an ascendency with which, at a later period, it would have to reckon. The crime of Custine was that of appearing indispensable, when indispensable men were not required; they wished that the country should be alone and every thing.

Two parties in the Convention and in the Committee of Public Safety, were perceptible in reference to the army; the party of Danton, and the party of Robespierre. Danton and his colleagues, Fabre d'Eglantine, Legendre, Chabot, Drouet, Camille Desmoulins, Bazire, Alquier, Merlin de Thionville, Merlin de Douai, and Delmas, had always maintained, with the generals of the republic, intelligence which attested in these conventionals the after-thoughts of military intervention, the instruments of which they caressed. Quite recently, Camille Desmoulins had excited the anger of patriots by declaring himself the friend of Dillon, whom he wished to place in command of the army of the north, and by wounding, with fierce invective, the accusers of this general. This hair-brained writer had accused the Committee of Public Safety of disorganising the armies, by interfering with the plans of the generals, through unskilful hands. The indignant La Montagne had only pardoned Camille Desmoulins, through pity for the lightness of his character. The Montagnards had regarded him, he said himself, with that unquiet and irritable eye with which the Roman knights, on leaving the senate, regarded Cæsar, when suspected of having joined in the conspiracy of Catiline.

Contentions had become acrimonious: since the flight of Dumouriez, every thing appeared treason. The friends of Danton and Legendre himself, said, that some generals' heads would be lost. Robespierre only followed the instinct of his nature and obeyed the mistrust of his character, in pressing the accusation of Custine, and in lowering all the military chiefs upon whom the army might cast their eyes, rather than upon the country. Liberty was his aim; he desired no army but one ready to defend it in its cradle. The whole strength of the people ought to consist, according to him, in the people themselves. The army, the instrument of glory, had always been converted in history into the instrument of tyranny. The army, in his eyes, was the arm of kings. He had foreseen from afar treason or a dictatorship more fatal to revolutions than anarchy itself. He persevered in his idea. Luckner, La Fayette, Dumouriez, Custine, Dillon, and Biron had never obtained favour from him. Victories had found him more cold and bitter than defeat; for he saw more danger in the renown of a fortunate general than in the loss of a battle. An exclusive admirer of democracy, even to cruelty, he was jealous of it even to sacrificing patriotism at its shrine.

II. Custine appeared before the tribunal, accompanied by the remembrances of his triumphs, and sustained by the presence of his daughter-in-law, whose beauty, grace, spirit, fascination, and tears moved to compassion the most obdurate hearts. This young female had espoused the only son of Custine, who was already imprisoned. She only quitted the cell of her husband to console her father-in-law in his prison, and to accompany him to the tribunal. Custine had been to her, during his elevation, but an exacting and peevish censor. The misfortune of the general had caused Madame Custine to forget all. She had devoted herself to the safety and the consolation of the man whose severity she had so often deplored. She wished to prove her love for her husband by restoring to him a father. She had besieged the judges, the juries, and the members of the committees with solicitations. She showed herself before the tribunal, by the side of Custine, like innocence, to dispel suspicion. Custine's only guilt was in the weakness and inconsiderateness of his pride. It was the first great act of ingratitude of the republic.

III. Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, — the iron-mouthed terrorist, indifferent to truth or to calumny, — read a long and garbled accusation, wherein all the military acts of Custine, and principally his retreats, and abandonment of Mayence, were perverted into acts of treason. Numerous witnesses were heard; some were informers by title, who scoured the camps to register the vague murmurs and personal discontent of the troops; others were German demagogues from Mayence, or from Liege, who charged the French general with having despised their counsel and checked their zeal. No one uttered the word treason.

Custine examined the different heads of the accusation, disputed the evidence, re-established the facts, circumstances, and dates, and annihilated every inculpation with a *sang froid*, a clearness, and force, which justly increased the renown of his talent upon that field of battle where he contended for his honour and his life. No proof was produced. Suspicion only rested in the minds of those who wished to harbour it. The indignant patriotism of the general was evidenced in accents of greatness and sincerity which confounded the ingratitude of his country.

IV. Levasseur de la Sarthe having told the tribunal that he had remarked in the conduct of Custine the same symptoms of treason which had characterised that of Dumouriez, in delivering up his own soldiers to the mercy of the enemy: "I!" exclaimed Custine, without further reply; "I! to have meditated the massacre of my brave brethren in arms!" Some tears flowed from his eyes, and were his only refutation.

In the meanwhile the impatience of the Jacobins reproved the inaction of the tribunal. The conviction of innocence, compassion, or admiration, gained all hearts. Custine terminated the debate by a defence of two hours, wherein the clearness of the refutation, the dignity of sentiment, the masculine and sober pathos of the warrior, and the revolutionary eloquence of the undoubted patriot, inspired all spectators with emotion and respect. They believed, and he believed himself in his acquittal. His daughter-in-law shed tears of joy. The juries, by an unexpected majority, declared him guilty. The tribunal pronounced the sentence: it was that of death.

It was night. The general, surrounded by a body of *gens d'armes*, re-entered the hall to hear his sentence. The anxiety of doubt blanched his countenance. He threw glances of uncertainty over the crowd, as if to interrogate their features as to his fate. But the crowd itself knew nothing. The torches which lighted the judgment-hall for the first time since the opening of the trial, announced to Custine that the deliberation of the jury had been long, and that his head had been a question of dubious debate. The palpitating audience, the dismayed appearance of the judges, impressed him for the first time with the presentiment of the scaffold. He seated himself, with his eyes fixed on the president. Coffinhal read the declaration of the jury, and asked him, according to custom, if he had any thing to urge against the punishment of death, which the public accuser summoned the judges to pronounce upon him.

The soul of Custine appeared overthrown, less by the terror of death, than by astonishment at the injustice. He threw looks around him in search of his defenders, and to implore one last appeal. His champions had withdrawn. Not perceiving them, Custine turned towards the tribunal with a gesture of despair: "I have no longer one single defender," he exclaimed; "they have all vanished. My conscience reproaches me for nothing. I die calmly, and innocent."

V. They carried away his daughter-in-law in a swoon. Applause broke out amongst the people outside. Custine returned to the registry of the Conciergerie, the waiting-hall between life and death. He there fell upon his knees, his face buried in his hands, and remained thus prostrated for two hours, buried in reflection and without uttering a word. It might be that he weighed within himself the sacrifice he had made of his rank, of his blood, and of his duty towards the throne, and of his Christian faith to the Revolution, against the recompence he had received from it. On rising, he requested a priest, and passed the entire night with the minister of God. His end belied his life. He required strength to die for that religion against which he had fought at the head of the soldiers of the republic. He wrote a feeling letter to his son, to recommend to him the care of his memory, in the brilliant days of the republic, and the re-establishment of his innocence in the hearts of the people when time should remove their suspicions. He ascended the cart, with his hands tied. A surtout of blue cloth, which retained some military lace and ornament, alone revealed the dignity of the general in the costume of the condemned. He ardently kissed the crucifix which his confessor, seated by his side, pressed to his lips. His eyes, bedewed with tears, were alternately directed from the crowd to heaven, as if he reproached the people with inconstancy, and demanded justice of God. Descending from the cart at the foot of the scaffold, he again fell upon his knees on the first step of the ladder. His prayer, which no one dared to interrupt, appeared to redouble in fervour, and was long continued. At length he ascended with a firm step, and regarding the knife for a moment, as if it were the bayonet of the country, he placed himself in the hands of the executioner—and died. This death caused all thoughts of treason to re-enter the hearts of the generals, all sorts of insubordination to affect duty; the head of their most popular chief had fallen before the astonished army. It showed them that they had no other chief than the Convention.

VI. Ninety-eight executions had in sixty days imbued the scaffold with blood. The axe of terror once placed in the hands of the people could no longer be withdrawn. Implacable and cowardly vengeance incessantly demanded the head of Marie Antoinette. The blind unpopularity of this unfortunate princess had outlived even her fall and disappearance. She was, in the words of the hardened people, the counter-revolution chained, but still the counter-revolution existing. In slaying Louis XVI. the people well knew that they had but immolated the hand. The soul of the court was, with the enemies of royalty, in Marie Antoinette. In their eyes, Louis XVI. was the personification of royalty; in his wife was lodged its crime. Already, for some days past, the council of the Commune resounded with significant accusations against those commissioners of the Commune who displayed any respect or pity for the prisoners in the Temple. Insolence and outrage were commanded them, as a virtuous display of their opinion. The Committee of Public Safety ordered Fouquier Tinville to press the sentence against the queen.

VII. There was no member of the committee who did not regard the queen as innocent of hatred towards the republic; no one thought her dangerous to the Revolution; some blushed at the necessity of delivering up this victim. Robespierre himself, so incensed against the king, would have preserved the queen. "Revolutions are very cruel," said he, at this period: "they regard neither sex nor age. Ideas are pitiless, but the people should also know how to forgive. If my head were not necessary to the Revolution, there are moments when I would offer that head to the people in exchange for one of those which they demand of us."

Saint Just alone would not allow any feeling to affect the inflexibility of the line he had traced in the committee for the path of the republic. As to the rest of La Montagne,—Collot, Legendre, Camille Desmoulins, Billaud Varennes, and Barrère, carried away by anger and drawn by weakness into the general movement of the moment,—they sought to divine the instincts of the multitude in order to please them by subserving to them. The compassion of opinion remained, which might create feeling for a queen, a widow, a mother, and a captive, immolated with indifference by a whole people. But opinion, paralysed by terror, was governed by the scaffold. Fear, like prosperity, renders us egotistical. Every one had too much pity for himself to spare it for the misfortunes of others.

VIII. We left the royal family in the Temple, at the moment when the king tore himself from their last embraces to walk to the scaffold. The queen, reclined in her clothes upon her bed, had remained during the long hours of agony of the 21st of January plunged in continued swoons, interrupted by sobs and prayers. She sought to divine the exact moment when the fatal knife should sever the life of her husband, to attach his soul to her own, and to invoke him as a protector in heaven, whom she had lost as a spouse on earth. Cries of "Vive la Republique," which resounded nearer and nearer, from the foot of the guillotine to the foot of the Bastille, and the rolling of the pieces of cannon as they returned from the boulevards to the sections, had indicated this moment to the queen. She ardently desired to know the sad details of the last thoughts and the last words of her husband. She knew that he would die as became a man and a wise one, she wanted to know if he had died as a king. Any weakness before his people and posterity would have humbled him more than the scaffold. The council of the Commune refused Marie Antoinette this consolation. Cléry, who had become more precious to her since his last communications with his master, and who was still, for upwards of a month, imprisoned in the Tower, had no longer any interview with the captives. He could not restore even the locks of hair, or the marriage ring.

These relics, almost stained with the blood from the scaffold, were sealed and deposited in the hall of the Tower where the commissioners of the Commune dwelt. Taken away by the pious theft of a municipal named Toulan, who concealed under the semblance of duty a passionate devotion for the queen, they were sent to the Comte de Provence.

IX. The queen requested permission of the gaolers to bestow the last mark of respect on the memory of her husband by wearing mourning. This request was granted, but upon conditions of simplicity and parsimony which resembled a sumptuary law over grief. By another special debate the council of the Commune granted also fifteen shirts to the king's son. Some relaxation of rigour in the interior captivity of the princesses followed the death of the king. At first, the commissioners of the Temple, hoped that the contented republic would not delay setting at liberty the women and the children. Some indulgent municipals allowed the possibility of this to escape in their speech. Madame Elizabeth and the young princess sought to excite this idea in the queen's mind, if not as a hope, at least as a diversion to her tears; but the queen remained insensible to it, whether that she believed not in the return of humanity to a people who had urged their resentment towards a once beloved king even to the scaffold, or that liberty without the throne and without her husband was less desirable than death.

She obstinately refused to descend into the garden, the promenade of which been reopened to her. "It would be impossible for her," she said, throwing herself into her sister's arms, "to pass before the door of the king's chamber, on the first story in the tower. She constantly beheld there the trace of his last step upon the staircase." Neither air nor heaven could compensate her for such a suffering of mind. Only, alarmed for the consequences of such complete seclusion to the health of her children, she consented, towards the end of February, to take a little air and exercise upon the platform of the tower.

The council of the Commune, informed of the curiosity which these promenades, perceived from without, excited in the neighbouring houses, and suspecting the communication of intelligence by looks, prevented the captives from even the sight of the horizon.

It ordered, after a debate of the 26th of March, that spaces of the battlements of the tower should be filled up by shutters, which, permitting the air to penetrate, yet intercepted the view. These precautions, which were cruel towards the children, were a benefit to the queen. They concealed from her the aspect of an odious city, the noise from the streets, and only permitted her to behold the heaven to which she aspired. Her health changed, without her mind perceiving the decay of her body. She passed sleepless nights, which were revealed in the morning by her features.

X. Her captivity became closer. The sensibility, however, which rules even opinion, had introduced devoted men through the wickets of the Temple. A plot was framed by some of the municipals to soften the captivity of the princesses, and to contrive means of communication from without. Toulan, Lepitre, Beugneau, Vincent, Bruno, Merle, and Michonis, deceived the surveillance of the other commissioners, and the precautions of the Commune.

M. Hue, valet de chambre to the king, who had remained free and forgotten in Paris, was in communication with these commissioners, and thus transmitted to the princesses the facts, the reports, the hopes, and the plots outside, which affected their situation. These communications, verbal or written, could not reach the captives without precautions and devices, which blinded the eyes of the other commissioners. The commissioners mutually watched each other. A look or a gesture of intelligence surprised by one would have conducted the other to the scaffold. Toulan and Lepitre borrowed the hand of Turgy, and the mediation of inanimate objects. A stove, pierced with heat-holes, was destined to warm a hall on the first story, which served as a common antechamber to the queen and Madame Elizabeth; it was in the pipes of this stove that Turgy deposited the notes, the advices, or the fragments of the public papers, which could inform the princesses of what was wished to be made known to them. The princesses in their turn concealed their notes, written with sympathetic ink, the colour of which was only revealed by exposure to the fire. The events within and without, the disposition of men's minds, the progress of La Vendée, the success of foreign armies, the glare of false hopes, which enlightened chimerical conspiracies for their deliverance, and, lastly, some letters, bathed in tears of real friendship, entered thus into the prison of Marie Antoinette. But hope entered not into her soul. The horror of her situation was precisely that of having nothing more to fear, and nothing more to hope. She possessed not even the agitation of that suffering which struggles. She combined the peace of despair and stillness of the sepulchre with the sensibility of life.

XI. On the 31st of May the princesses heard, without understanding it, the distant murmur of the commotion which carried off the Girondists. They did not know, until many days afterwards, of the fall of these men who, instead of delivering them, had drawn them more rapidly on to their death. Hébert and Chaumette came from time to time to feed upon the spectacle of their misery, sometimes abusive, sometimes affecting pity, according to the rage or suavity of the people. Toulan, Lepitre, and their accomplices had been denounced by the wife of Tison, who waited on the queen. They were executed. This woman, troubled by remorse, lost her reason, threw herself at the feet of the queen, implored her pardon, and disturbed the prison for many days by the sight and the noise of her madness. The princesses, forgetting the denunciations of this unfortunate being, in consideration of her repentance and insanity, watched over her by turns, and deprived themselves of their own food to relieve her.

After the 31st of May, the terror which reigned in Paris penetrated even to the donjon, and gave to men, to purposes, and to measures a character of rigour and persecution still more odious. Each municipal proved his patriotism by exceeding his predecessor in insults.

The Convention, after having decreed that the queen should be judged, ordered her to be separated from her son. They desired this order to be read to the royal family. The child threw himself into his mother's arms, beseeching her not to abandon him to his executioners. The queen placed him upon her bed, and, interposing herself between him and the municipals, declared to them that they should kill her on the spot sooner than approach him. Menaced in vain by violence if she continued to resist the decree, she contended for two hours against the injunctions, the threats, the abuse, and the gestures of the commissioners, until her strength was totally exhausted. At length, having fallen through lassitude at the foot of the bed, and persuaded by Madame Elizabeth, and by her daughter, she dressed the dauphin, and transferred him, bathed with her tears, to the gaolers.

The shoemaker Simon, selected, from the brutality of his manners, to replace the heart of a mother, carried the dauphin into the chamber where that young king was doomed to die. The child remained two days lying on the floor without accepting any nourishment. No supplication of the queen could obtain from the Commune the favour of a single interview with her son. Fanaticism had murdered nature. The doors of the apartment of the princesses was kept bolted night and day. The municipals themselves no longer appeared there. The turnkeys alone ascended three times a day to bring them provisions and inspect the bars of the windows. No waiting-woman had replaced the wife of Tison, who was confined in a lunatic asylum. Madame Elizabeth and the young princess made the beds, swept the chamber, and waited upon the queen. The only consolation of the princesses was to ascend each day the platform of their tower, at the hour when the young dauphin walked on that on his side, and to watch for an opportunity of exchanging a look with him. The queen passed all the time of these promenades, her eyes bent upon a fissure in the skylight, between the battlements, endeavouring to catch a glimpse of the shadow of her child, and to hear his voice.

Tison, whom the remorse and madness of his wife had softened, came from time to time secretly to inform Madame Elizabeth of the situation and health of the dauphin. The princess did not report half the cruel information she thus received. The obscenity and brutality of Simon depraved at once the body and soul of his pupil. He called him the young wolf of the Temple. He treated him as the young of wild animals are treated, when taken from the mother and reduced to captivity; at once intimidated by blows, and enervated by the taming of their keepers. He punished him for sensibility; he rewarded meanness; he encouraged vice; he taught the child to insult the memory of his father, the tears of his mother, the piety of his aunt, the innocence of his sister, and the fidelity of his partisans. He made him sing obscene songs in honour of the republic, of the "*lanterne*," and of the scaffold. Often intoxicated, Simon amused himself with this derision of fortune which delighted his base mind. He made the child wait upon him at table, himself seated, the former standing. One day, in cruel sport, he nearly tore an eye from the dauphin's head, by striking him on the face with a knotted towel. Another time he seized a poker from the hearth, raised it over the child's head, and threatened to knock him down. More frequently he was lenient with him, and feigned to compassionate his age and misfortune, in order to gain his confidence, and report his conversation to Hébert and Chaumette. "Capet," said he to him one day, at the moment when the Vendean army passed the Loire, "if the Vendeans should deliver you, what would you do?" "I would forgive you," replied the child. Simon himself was affected by this answer, and recognised therein the blood of Louis XVI. But this man, led astray by pride at his importance, by fanaticism, and by wine, was neither susceptible of constant brutality, nor of lasting kindness. It was drunkenness and ferocity charged by fate with the debasement and denaturalizing of the last germ of royalty.

XII. On the 2d of August, at two o'clock in the morning, the queen was awakened, that the decree might be read which ordained her removal to the Conciergerie, whilst her trial was proceeding. She heard the order read without betraying either astonishment or grief. It was one step nearer the end which she saw was inevitable, and which she wished nearer. In vain did Madame Elizabeth and her daughter throw themselves at the feet of the members of the Commune, to supplicate them not to separate them, the one from her sister, the other from her mother. No word, no gesture answered them The queen, speechless also, and still half-naked, was compelled to dress herself in the presence of the group of men who filled her chamber. They ransacked it. They sealed up the little trinkets and jewels she carried about her; they were a pocket-book, a pocket-mirror, a gold ring, entwined with hair, a paper, upon which two hearts were engraved in gold, with initials, a portrait of her friend the Princesse de Lamballe, two other female portraits, which recalled two friends of her infancy at Vienna, and some symbolic signs of devotion to the Virgin, which Madame Elizabeth had given her to wear, as a preservative in her misfortunes, and as a remembrance of heaven in the dungeon. They left her only a handkerchief and a bottle of vinegar, to recover her from fainting, should she yield to emotion on her departure. The queen, folding her daughter in her arms, drew her into an angle of the chamber, and, covering her with blessings and with tears, bade her a last adieu. She recommended to her the same forgiveness of their enemies, and the same forgetfulness of persecution as Louis XVI. had, when dying, recommended to her; she placed the hands of the young girl in those of Madame Elizabeth. "Behold," said she, "the person who will be henceforth your father and your mother; obey her, and love her as if she were myself. And you, my sister," said she to Madame Elizabeth, throwing herself into her arms, "I leave in you another mother to my poor children; love them as you have loved us, even in the dungeon, and even unto death!"

Madame Elizabeth uttered some words in so low a tone to the queen that no one heard them. It was doubtless a recommendation of that piety which governed and sanctified even her grief. The queen bowed her head in compliance, and then left the apartment, with slow step, her eyes cast down, and not daring to turn a last look upon her daughter and her sister, for fear of exhausting her soul in one supreme emotion. On issuing from the wicket, she struck her forehead against the beam of the low door. She was asked if she had hurt herself. "Oh no," said she, in an accent pregnant with her destiny: "nothing now can further harm me." A carriage, into which two municipals ascended with her, and which was escorted by *gens d'armes*, conducted her to the Conciergerie.

XIII. The prison of the Conciergerie is hidden under the vast structure of the Palais de Justice, of which it forms the subterraneous floor. It is thus, as it were, hollowed out of its foundation. These sombre vaults of the Palace of St. Louis are at present completely enclosed by the elevation of the ground, — the earth gradually overwhelms the monuments of men in great cities. These subterraneous caverns form the wicket-doors, the gaols, the antechambers, and the posts of the *gend'armerie* and turnkeys. The long corridors, as low as cloisters, open on one side upon arcades, which receive light from the meadows, on the other upon some dungeons, to which we descend by steps. The narrow courts, scattered in this vast square pile of stone, are obscured by the high walls of the Palais de Justice. The daylight descends there perpendicularly, and from afar, as into the depths of large square wells. The highway of the quays separates the Conciergerie from the Seine. The elevation of this floor above the level of the cells and the courts, and the oozing of the earth saturated with water, diffused over the pavement, the walls, and even the courts, a sepulchral humidity, which constantly broke the cement, and covered the masonry of the edifice with patches of green moss. The plash of the river under the bridges, the continued noise of carriages upon the quay, and the hollow sound of the footsteps of the crowd which flocked, during the hours of the tribunals, to the halls of justice and the upper stories of the palace, perpetually shook these vaults.

These noises rolled like distant thunder in the ears of the prisoners, and seemed to present to them constantly the eternal lamentations of these abodes. Massive pillars, low vaults, narrow arches, fantastical sculpture, with which the Gothic chisels had decorated the edges and the capitals of the pillars, recalled the ancient destination of this palace of the kings of the first race, changed into the common sewer of vice and crime, and the portico of death.

These gigantic substructures served as a foundation to the high quadrangular tower, from which once all the fiefs of the kingdom were raised. This tower was the centre of monarchy. Thus, it was under this palace of feudalism itself that the vengeance or the derision of fate confined the agony of monarchy and the punishment of feudalism. Who would have told the kings of the first races, that in this palace they erected the prison and the tomb of their successors? Time is the grand expiator of human affairs. But, alas! it avenged itself blindly, and it washed out, with the tears and the blood of a female victim of the throne, the wrongs and oppression of twenty kings!

XIV. When you have descended the steps of a large staircase, and have passed by two large doorways, you enter into a cloister, the arcades of which open upon a court, the promenade of the prisoners. A series of roughly planed oaken doors, fastened with bands, locks, and massive bolts, ranged on the left under these corridors. The second of these doors, on issuing from the wickets, looked into a small subterraneous chamber, the floor of which was lower by three steps than the threshold of the corridor. A barred window borrowed light from a court narrow and deep as an empty cistern. On the left of this first cell, a door still lower than the first, but without fastenings and bolts, led to a kind of sepulchral vault, paved and walled in freestone, blackened by the smoke of torches, and encrusted by dampness. A window, taking its light from the same meadow as that of the antechamber, and garnished with trellis-work of interwoven iron bars, allowed a light always similar to twilight to filter through. At the bottom of this little cellar, on the side opposite the window, a miserable pallet, without canopy or curtains, with covering of coarse cloth, such as that which passes from one bed to the other in hospitals and barracks, a small deal table, a wooden box, and two straw chairs, formed all the furniture. It was there, that in the middle of the night, and by the light of a tallow candle, the Queen of France was thrown, fallen from grade to grade, from misfortune to misfortune, from Versailles and from Trianon, even into this dungeon. Two *gens d'armes*, with naked swords in hand, were placed on duty in the first chamber, with the door open, and their eyes fixed on the interior of the queen's cell, being charged not to lose sight of her even in her sleep.

XV. Men cannot, however, always find implacable instruments for their ferocity. Even dungeons have their mitigations. A respectful gesture, a look of intelligence, the sound of a sympathising voice, a stolen word, made the victim comprehend that she was not as yet totally shut out from humanity. This communication with that which breathes and feels on earth, gives to the unfortunate, even in the last hour, a link with existence. The queen found in the countenance, in the eyes, and in the soul of Madame Richard, the wife of the concierge, this feeling concealed under the rigour of her duties. The hand ordained to bruise her became softened, in order to comfort her. Every thing which the arbitrary law of a prison permitted to be adopted, as alleviation of the rules in captivity, nourishment, and solitude, was essayed by Madame Richard, to prove to her prisoner that, even in the depth of her misfortunes, she still reigned, through pity and devotion, over one heart.

Madame Richard, a royalist in remembrance, felt less pride in having the guardianship of the daughter, the wife, and the mother of kings, consigned to her mercy, than in the happiness of being able to dry her tears. She introduced some necessary or convenient furniture into the dungeon of the queen. She sent to the Temple to seek the tapestry-work, the balls of wool, and the needles which Marie Antoinette had left there; Madame Richard herself prepared the prisoner's food. She brought her news of her sister, her daughter, and her son, which she procured by correspondence with the Temple. She transmitted through the medium of commissioners, who were accomplices, news from the queen to her sister and the children. The concierge Richard, although apparently more austere, shared in all the feelings of his wife, and joined her in all these consolations.

XVI. People without were ignorant of the period at which Marie Antoinette was to be tried. This adjournment of the Committee of Public Safety caused a hope that they would deceive the ferocious impatience of the populace, or wear it out by delay. Many municipals joined secretly in plots of escape. Madame Richard favoured the introduction of these devoted men into the cell. She cleverly engaged the attention of the *gens d'armes* on guard in the antechamber during these rapid interviews. Michonis, a member of the municipality, and administrator of police, who had already proved his devotion to the royal family in the Temple, at the peril of his life, continued the same devotion in the Conciergerie. By his favour a royalist gentleman, named Rougeville, was introduced into the prison, saw the queen, and offered her a flower which contained a note. This note spoke of deliverance, and was detected in the hands of the queen by one of the *gens d'armes.* Michonis was arrested. Madame Richard and her husband, deprived of their functions, were cast into the dungeons where they had permitted indulgence to enter. The queen trembled.

But this time a generous heart avoided the insults which Hébert and Chaumette ordered to be inflicted on their victim.

No woman's hand could be found, which would lend itself as an instrument of torture to another woman so highly born, and so lowly fallen.

It was in contemplation to bestow the office of concierge of the prison on the brutal Simon. M. and Madame Bault, the former concierges of La Force, solicited and obtained the post, with the intention of assuaging the captivity and consoling the last hours of their former mistress. The princess, who had protected them in the time of her omnipotence, rejoiced to find in them well-known faces and faithful hearts.

Madame Bault, contrary to the orders of the Commune, which enjoined her to give nothing more to the queen than the bread and water allowed to the prisoners, prepared her food herself. In place of the fetid water of the Seine, she caused pure water to be brought daily from Arcueil, such as the queen had been accustomed to drink at Trianon. Fruit and flower women from the market, who were wont in former days to serve the royal houses, secretly brought melons, peaches, and bouquets, which the concierge allowed to reach his prisoner, thus testifying the fidelity of his heart, under the most humble circumstances. The interior of the cell thus presented to the captive some resemblance and odour of those gardens she had so much loved. Madame Bault, to affect harshness and incorruptibility in her surveillance, never entered the princess's cell: her husband only presented himself there, accompanied by administrators of police.

The humidity of the ground had caused the two only gowns which the queen possessed — the one a white one, the other a black, which she wore alternately — to fall in tatters. Her three chemises, her stockings, and her shoes, constantly saturated with water, were in the same condition. Madame Bault's daughter mended these dresses and shoes, and secretly distributed, as relics, the pieces and shreds which came off them. This young girl, who was admitted every morning into the dungeon, and who, by her gaiety and grace, softened the harshness of the *gens d'armes*, assisted to dress the queen, and to turn the mattress of her bed. She dressed the prisoner's head; her hair, once so thick and bright, had grown white, and fell from a head, but thirty-seven years of age, as if nature had prescience of the shortness of her life.

XVII. The queen wrote by means of a needle's point the thoughts which she desired to retain upon the stucco of the wall. One of the commissioners, who visited her chamber after her sentence, copied some of these inscriptions. The greater number were German or Italian verses alluding to her fate. The rest were little verses in imitation of the Psalms and of the gospel. The wall of the side opposite to the window was covered with them.

These slight alleviations of captivity could not, however, extend so far as to alter the nakedness, the darkness, and the stillness of the prison. The queen having expressed a wish for a cotton counterpane lighter than the heavy covering of coarse wool, which oppressed her in her sleep, Bault transmitted this request to the solicitor-general of the Commune. "How dare you make such a request," answered Hébert brutally, "you deserve to be sent to the guillotine!"

The queen sought every means of bequeathing to her children or her friends some material token of the remembrance which she cherished for them even in death. She plucked out the threads of the old woollen coverlid, which was stretched upon her bed, one by one. With the assistance of two ivory tooth-picks, converted into tapestry needles, she plaited a garter; when she had finished it, she made a sign to Bault, and let it fall at her feet. Bault, pretending to have dropped his handkerchief, stooped to pick it up, and thus concealed it from the observation of the *gens d'armes*. This last and affecting work of the queen, bathed in tears, was, after her death, transmitted to her daughter.

During the last days of her confinement, the gaoler had obtained permission, under the pretext of better guaranteeing his responsibility, that the *gens d'armes* should be withdrawn from the interior, and placed outside the door in the corridor. The queen had no longer to submit to the stare, the conversation, and the continual insults of her inspectors. She had no longer any society but her thoughts. She passed the hours in reading, meditation, and prayer.

XVIII. On the 13th of October, Fouquier-Tinville came to notify to her his act of accusation. She listened to it as a form of death, which was not worth the honour of discussion. Her crime was, being a queen, the consort and mother of a king, and the having abhorred a revolution which deprived her of a crown, of her husband, her children, and her life. To love the Revolution, she must have hated nature, and destroyed all human feeling. Between her and the republic there was no legal form — it was hatred even to death. The stronger of the two inflicted it on the other. It was not justice; it was vengeance. The queen knew it; the woman received it: she could not repent; and she would not supplicate. She chose, as a matter of form, two defenders — Chauveau-Lagarde and Tronson-Ducoudray.

These advocates, young, generous, and of high repute, had secretly solicited this honour. They sought, in the solemn trial of the revolutionary tribunal, not a despicable salary for their eloquence, but the applause of posterity. Nevertheless, a remnant of that instinct of life, which causes the dying to seek a chance of safety, even when impossible, occupied the queen the remainder of the day and the following night. She noted some answers to the interrogatories to which she had to submit.

The following day, 14th of October, at noon, she dressed herself, and arranged her hair, with all the decorum which the simplicity and poverty of her garments permitted. She did not affect a display of the rags which should have made the republic blush. She did not dream of moving the regards of the people to pity. Her dignity as a woman and a queen forbade her to make any display of her misery.

She ascended the stairs of the judgment-hall, surrounded by a strong escort of *gend'armerie*, crossed through the multitude, which so solemn a vengeance had drawn into the passages, and seated herself upon the bench of the accused. Her forehead, scathed by the Revolution, and faded by grief, was neither humbled nor cast down. Her eyes, surrounded by that black circle, which want of rest and tears had graved like a bed of sorrow beneath the eyelids, still darted some rays of their former brilliancy upon the faces of her enemies. The beauty which had intoxicated the court, and dazzled Europe, was no longer discernible; but its traces could be still distinguished. Her mouth sorrowfully preserved the folds of royal pride, but ill effaced by the lines of long suffering. The natural freshness of her northern complexion still struggled with the livid palor of the prison. Her hair, whitened by anguish, contrasted with this youth of countenance and figure, and flowed down upon her neck as in bitter derision of the fate of youth and beauty. Her countenance was natural, — not that of an irritated queen, insulting in the depth of her contempt the people who triumphed over her, — nor that of a suppliant who intercedes by her humility, and who seeks forbearance in compassion, but that of a victim whom long misfortune had habituated to her lot, who had forgotten that she was a queen, who remembered only that she was a woman, who claimed nothing of her vanished rank; who resigned nothing of the dignity of her sex and her deep distress.

XIX. The crowd, silent through curiosity rather than emotion, contemplated her with eager looks. The populace seemed to rejoice at having this haughty woman at their feet, and measured their greatness and their strength by the fall of their most formidable enemy. The crowd was composed principally of women, who had undertaken to accompany the condemned to the scaffold with every possible insult. The judges were Hermann, Foucault, Sellier, Coffinhal, Deliége, Ragmey, Maire, Denizot, and Masson. Hermann presided.

"What is your name?" demanded Hermann of the accused. "I am called Marie Antoinette of Lorraine, in Austria," answered the queen. Her low and agitated voice seemed to ask pardon of the audience for the greatness of these names. "Your condition?" "Widow of Louis, formerly King of the French." "Your age?" "Thirty-seven."

Fouquier-Tinville read the act of accusation to the tribunal. It was the summing up of all the supposed crimes of birth, rank, and situation of a young queen; a stranger, adored in her court, omnipotent over the heart of a weak king, prejudiced against ideas which she did not comprehend, and against institutions which dethroned her. This part of the accusation was but the act of accusation of fate. These crimes were true, but they were the faults of her rank. The queen could no more absolve herself from them, than the people from accusing her of them. The remainder of the act of accusation was only an odious echo of all the reports and murmurs which had crept during ten years into public belief, of prodigality, supposed licentiousness, and pretended treason of the queen. It was her unpopularity converted into crimination. She heard all this without betraying any sign of emotion or astonishment, as a woman accustomed to hatred, and with whom calumny had lost its bitterness, and insult its poignancy. Her fingers wandered heedlessly over the bar of the chair, like those of a woman who recalls remembrances upon the keys of a harpsichord. She endured the voice of Fouquier-Tinville, but she heard him not. The witnesses were called and interrogated. After each evidence Hermann addressed the accused. She answered with presence of mind, and briefly discussed the evidence as she refuted it. The only error in this defence was the defence itself.

XX. Many of these witnesses, taken from the prisons in which they were already confined, recalled other days to her, and were themselves affected at seeing the Queen of France in such ignominy. Of this number was Manuel, accused of humanity in the Temple, and who gloried in the accusation; Bailly, who bent with more respect before the downfal of the queen than he had done before her power. The answers of Marie Antoinette compromised no one. She offered herself alone to the hatred of her enemies; and generously shielded all her friends. Each time that the debates of the trial brought up the names of the Princesse de Lamballe, or the Duchess of Polignac, to whom she had been most tenderly attached, her voice assumed a tone of feeling, sorrow, and regard. She evinced her determination not to abandon her sentiments before death, and that if she delivered her head up to the people, she would not yield them her heart to profane. The ignominy of certain accusations sought to dishonour her, even in her maternal feelings. The cynic Hébert, who was heard as a witness upon what had passed at the Temple, imputed acts of depravity and debauchery to the queen, extending even to the corruption of her own son, "with the intention," said he, "of enervating the soul and body of that child, and reigning in his name over the ruin of his understanding." The pious Madame Elizabeth was named as witness and accomplice in these crimes. The indignation of the audience broke out at these words, not against the accused, but against the accuser. Outraged nature aroused itself. The queen made a sign of horror, not knowing how to answer without soiling her lips. A juryman took up the testimony of Hébert, and asked the accused why she had not replied to this accusation? "I have not answered it," said she, rising with the majesty of innocence, and the indignation of modesty, "because there are accusations to which nature refuses to reply." Afterwards, turning towards the women of the audience, the most enraged against her, and summoning them by the testimony of their hearts and their community of sex, "I appeal against it to all mothers here present," cried she. A shudder of horror against Hébert ran through the crowd. The queen answered with no less dignity to the imputations which were alleged against her of having abused her ascendency over the weakness of her husband. "I never knew that character of him," said she; "I was but his wife, and my duty, as well as my pleasure, was to conform to his will." She did not sacrifice by a single word the memory and honour of the king for the purpose of her own justification, or to the pride of having reigned in his name. She desired to carry back to him to heaven his memory honoured or avenged.

XXI. After the closing of these long debates, Hermann summed up the accusation, and declared that the entire French people deposed against Marie Antoinette. He invoked punishment in the name of equality in crime and equality in punishment — and put the question of guilty to the jury. Chauveau-Lagarde and Tronson-Ducoudray, in their defence, excited posterity without being able to affect the audience or the judges. The jury deliberated for form's sake, and returned to the hall after an hour's interval. The queen was called to hear her sentence. She had already heard it in the stamping and joy of the crowd, which filled the palace. She listened to it without uttering a single word, or making any motion. Hermann asked her if she had any thing to say upon the pain of death being pronounced upon her. She shook her head, and arose as if to walk to her execution. She disdained to reproach the people with the rigour of her destiny and with their cruelty. To supplicate would have been to acknowledge it; to complain would have been to humble herself; to weep, would have been to abase herself. She wrapped herself in that silence which was her last protection. Ferocious applause followed her even to the staircase which descends from the tribunal to the prison.

The first light of day began to struggle under these vaults with the flambeaux with which the *gens d'armes* lighted their steps. It was four in the morning. Her last day had commenced. She was placed, while awaiting the hour of punishment, in the dark hall wherein the condemned await the executioner. She asked the gaoler for ink, paper, and a pen, and wrote the following letter to her sister, which was found afterwards amongst the papers of Couthon, to whom Fouquier-Tinville rendered homage, by these curiosities of death and relics of royalty.

"This 15th Oct., at half past four in the morning.

"I write you, my sister, for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death, that only awaits criminals, but to go and rejoin your brother. Innocent as he, I hope to show the same firmness as he did in these last moments. I grieve bitterly at leaving my poor children; you know that I existed but for them and you — you who have by your friendship sacrificed all to be with us. In what a position do I leave you! I have learned, by the pleadings on my trial, that my daughter was separated from you. Alas! — poor child — I dare not write to her; she would not receive my letter; I know not even if this may reach you. Receive my blessing for both. I hope one day, when they are older, they may rejoin you, and rejoice in liberty at your tender care. May they both think on what I have never ceased to inspire them with! May their friendship and mutual confidence form their happiness! May my daughter feel that at her age she ought always to aid her brother with that advice with which the greater experience she possesses, and her friendship, should inspire her! May my son, on his part, render to his sister every care and service which affection can dictate! May they, in short, both feel, in whatever position they may find themselves, that they can never be truly happy but by their union! Let them take example by us. How much consolation has our friendship given us in our misfortunes! And, in happiness, to share it with a friend is doubly sweet. Where can one find any more tender or dearer than in one's own family? Let my son never forget the last words of his father. I repeat them to him expressly: — '*Let him never attempt to avenge our death!*'

"I must now speak to you of a matter most painful to my heart. I know how much trouble this child must have given you. Pardon him, my dear sister; think of his age, and how easy it is to make a child say what one wishes, and what he even does not comprehend. A day will arrive, I hope, when he will the better feel all the value of your kindness and affection for them both. It still remains to me to confide to you my last thoughts. I had desired to write them from the commencement of the trial; but, exclusively of their not permitting me to write, the proceedings have been so rapid that I should really not have had the time.

"I die in the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion; in that of my fathers; in that in which I have been bred, and which I have always professed, having no spiritual consolation to expect, not knowing if priests of this religion still exist here — and even the place in which I am would expose them too much, were they once to enter it. I sincerely ask pardon of God for all the errors I may have committed during my life. I hope that, in his kindness, he will accept my last vows, as well as those I have long since made, that he may vouchsafe to receive my soul in his mercy and goodness. I ask pardon of all those with whom I am acquainted, and of you, my sister, in particular, for all the trouble which, without desiring it, I may have caused you. I forgive all my enemies the evil they have done me. I say here adieu to my aunts, and to all my brothers and sisters. I had friends, and the idea of being separated for ever from them and their sorrows, causes me the greatest regret I experience in dying. Let them, at least, know that in my last moments I have thought of them. Adieu, my good and kind sister! May this letter reach you! Think of me always! I embrace you with all my heart, as well as those poor and dear children. . . . My God, how heartrending it is to quit them for ever! Adieu! . . . Adieu! . . . I ought no longer to occupy myself, but with my spiritual duties. As I am not mistress of my actions, they may bring me perhaps a priest. But I here protest that I will not tell him one word, and that I will treat him absolutely as a stranger."

XXII. This letter being finished, she kissed each page repeatedly, as if they could transmit the warmth of her lips and the moisture of her tears to her children. She folded it without sealing it, and gave it to the concierge Bault. He remitted it to Fouquier-Tinville. It has been stated that she had received, in her last moments, a visit from an unconfirmed priest, and the sacrament of the Catholic religion. Her death had none of these consolations to assuage or to fortify it in its last agony. Here is, from the lips of an eye-witness, the truthful account of the religious circumstances which preceded the execution of the queen.

The republic, even in its most terrible excesses, had not entirely broken, as was believed, with God, nor severed all the bands of man with religion and of the soul with immortality. It had nationalised its forms of worship; but it had neither abolished the exercise nor the wages of this nationalised adoration. It had preserved the ancient customs of criminal justice, the habit of sending ministers of religion to the condemned, previous to execution.

There were constitutional priests. The bishop of Paris, Gobel, scrupulously inspected this charitable service of the clergy in the prisons. The multiplicity of punishments had compelled him to augment the number of ecclesiastics who devoted themselves to these duties. There were always at the bishopric five or six appointed priests, pious sentinels, who relieved each other in this species of funereal duty. Whenever the revolutionary tribunal had decreed death, the president transmitted a list of the condemned to Fouquier-Tinville. Fouquier remitted it to the bishop. He informed the priests, and they divided the prisons between them. The same formality took place in regard to the queen; only the high station of the victim, the horror of the mission, the repugnance to attach their name in history to any circumstances of this murder, which would resound so remotely to posterity; in short, the dread that the fury of the people would not permit the *cortége* even to reach the scaffold, and might sacrifice with the queen the minister of worship who should assist her upon the car; the certainty of seeing themselves repulsed by a woman who rejected the whole Revolution, even to its prayers, rendered the priests of Gobel timid and tardy in the accomplishment of these duties with Marie Antoinette. They shifted the responsibility from one to another.

Three amongst them, however, presented themselves during the night at the Conciergerie, and timidly offered their ministry to the queen. One was the constitutional curate of St. Landry, named Girard; another, one of the vicars of the bishop of Paris; the third an Alsatian priest, named Lothringer. The queen received them rather as the precursors of the executioner than as the precursors of Christ. The schism with which they were infected was, in her eyes, one of the stains of the republic. The seemliness of their manners and conversation, however, touched the queen. She coloured her refusal with an expression of gratitude and regret. "I thank you," she said to the Abbé Gerard; "but my religion forbids me to receive the pardon of God from the mouth of a priest of any other than the Roman communion. I shall have much need of it, however," added she, with a mild and sorrowful humility, which confessed itself in her heart before man, and not before the priest; "for I am a great sinner! But I am about to receive a great sacrament!" "Yes, martyrdom!" concluded the curate of St. Landry, in a low voice, and he retired bowing.

The Abbé Lambert, a young man of a noble figure, of a stature rather military than sacerdotal, of pure republicanism, and of a sincere faith, although agitated by the storms of the time, remained respectfully at a distance behind his two coadjutors. He contemplated, in silence, this fearful expiation of royalty by a woman, and left in amazement, the tears flowing from his eyes.

The Abbé Lothringer persisted in his charity, which more resembled an obligation than a holy work. He was a man pious from conviction, officious in conduct, limited in understanding, and regarding priesthood as a trade. He practised it with a restless and frivolous zeal, administering to most of the condemned in the dungeons, and watching the return of a thought to God even at the foot of the scaffold. Such was the only comforter whom Providence gave, in her last hours, to the woman who, of all on earth, had the most need of consolation.

None of the Abbé Lothringer's importunate solicitations could bend the queen, or make her kneel at his feet. She prayed alone, and confessed herself only to God. She did not possess the calm and lively faith of her husband to support her in her last hour. Her soul was rather passionate than pious. The atmosphere of the eighteenth century, which she had inhaled; the worldly distractions of her habits; and, latterly, the cares of the throne, and political intrigues, had often dissipated religion from her mind, too open to worldly vanities to enable her constantly to retain before her the thoughts of God. Religion had long been to her but a public form of decency, an etiquette of royalty, the degradation of which humbled the court and weakened the throne. She had only recurred to it when in the depths of the abyss of her misfortunes. The example of the faith of Louis XVI. and of his sister had acted, as a pious contagion, upon her soul. But this faith of imitation and desire had not attained, perhaps, to that state of security and beatitude which changes darkness into light, and death into apotheosis. Marie Antoinette was only resolved to die as a Christian, as her husband had died, and as her angelic sister, whom she had left as a mother to her children, lived. This sister had procured for her, in secret, a consolation which her piety deemed a necessity of salvation. It was the number and the floor of a house in the Rue St. Honoré, before which the condemned passed, and in which a Catholic priest would be on the day of punishment, at the hour of execution, to bestow upon her, from above, and unknown to the people, the absolution and benediction of God. The queen relied on this invisible sacrament, to die in the faith of her race and in reconciliation with Heaven.

XXIII. The queen, after having written and prayed, slept soundly for some hours. On her awakening, the daughter of Madame Bault dressed and adjusted her hair with more neatness and respect for exterior appearance than on other days. Marie Antoinette cast off the black robe she had worn since her husband's death, and dressed herself in a white gown, emblematic of innocence on earth, and joy for heaven. A white handkerchief covered her shoulders, a white cap her hair. A black ribbon which bound this cap around her temples alone recalled to the world her mourning; to herself her widowhood, and to the people her immolation.

The windows and the parapets, the roofs and the trees, were loaded with spectators. A crowd of women enraged against the *Autrichienne*, pressed round the gratings, and even into the courts. A pale cold autumn fog hung over the Seine, and permitted, here and there, some rays of the sun to glitter upon the roofs of the Louvre and upon the tower of the palace. At eleven o'clock the *gens d'armes* and the executioners entered the hall of the condemned. The queen embraced the daughter of the concierge, cut her hair off herself, allowed herself to be bound without a murmur, and issued with a firm step from the Conciergerie. No feminine weakness, no faintness of heart, no trembling of the body, nor paleness of features were apparent. Nature obeyed her will, and lent her all its power to die as a queen.

On entering from the staircase to the court, she perceived the car of the condemned, towards which the *gens d'armes* directed her steps. She stopped, as if to retrace her road, and made a motion of astonishment and horror. She had thought that the people would have clothed their hatred somewhat decently, and that she would be conducted to the scaffold, as the king was, in a close carriage. Having compressed this emotion, she bowed her head in token of assent, and ascended the car. The Abbé Lothringer placed himself behind her, notwithstanding her refusal.

The *cortége* left the Conciergerie amidst cries of "*Vive la Republique!*" "*Place à l'Autrichienne!*" "*Place à la veuve Capet!*" "*A bas la tyrannie!*" The comedian Grammont, aide-de-camp of Ronsin, gave the example and the signal to the people, brandishing his naked sword, and parting the crowd by the breast of his horse. The hands of the queen being bound, deprived her of support against the jolting of the car upon the pavement. She endeavoured by every means to preserve her equilibrium, and the dignity of her attitude. "These are not your cushions of Trianon," shouted some wretches to her. The cries, the looks, the laughter, and gestures of the people overwhelmed her with humiliation. Her cheeks changed continually from purple to paleness, and revealed the agitation and reflux of her blood. Notwithstanding the care she had taken of her toilette, the tattered appearance of her dress, the coarse linen, the common stuff and the crumpled plaits, dishonoured her rank. The curls of her hair escaped from her cap and flapped with the breeze upon her forehead. Her red and swollen eyes, though dry, revealed the long inundation of care augmented by tears. She bit her under lip for some moments with her teeth, as a person who suppressed the utterance of acute suffering.

When she had crossed the Pont-au-Change, and the tumultuous quarters of Paris, the silence and serious aspect of the crowd bespoke another region of the people. If it was not pity, it was at least dismay. Her countenance regained the calm and uniformity of expression which the outrages of the multitude had at first disturbed. She thus traversed slowly the whole length of the Rue Saint Honoré. The priest placed on the long seat by her side endeavoured in vain to call her attention, by words which she seemed to repel from her ears. Her looks wandered, with all their intelligence, over the façades of the houses, over the republican inscriptions, and over the costumes and physiognomy of this capital, so changed to her since sixteen months of captivity. She regarded above all the windows of the upper stories, from which floated the tri-coloured banner, the ensign of patriotism.

The people thought, and witnesses have written, that her light and puerile attention was attracted to this exterior decoration of republicanism. Her thoughts were different. Her eyes sought a sign of safety amongst these signs of her loss. She approached the house which had been pointed out to her in her dungeon. She examined with a glance the window whence was to descend upon her head the absolution of a disguised priest. A gesture, inexplicable to the multitude, made him known to her. She closed her eyes, lowered her forehead, collected herself under the invisible hand which blessed her; and, being unable to use her bound hands, she made the sign of the cross upon her breast, by three movements of her hand. The spectators thought that she prayed alone, and respected her fervency. An inward joy and secret consolation shone from this moment upon her countenance.

XXIV. On entering upon the Place of the Revolution, the leaders of the *cortége* caused the car to approach as near as possible to the Pont Tournant, and stopped it for a short time before the entrance of the gardens of the Tuileries. Marie Antoinette turned her head on the side of her ancient palace, and regarded for some moments that odious and yet dear theatre of her greatness and of her fall. Some tears fell upon her knees. All her passed life appeared before her in the hour of death. Some few more turns of the wheels, and she was at the foot of the guillotine. The priest and the executioner assisted her to descend, sustaining her by the elbows. She mounted the steps of the ladder. On reaching the scaffold, she inadvertently trod upon the executioner's foot. This man uttered a cry of pain. "Pardon me," she said to him, in a tone of voice as if she had spoken to one of her courtiers. She knelt down for an instant and uttered a half-audible prayer; afterwards rising, "Adieu once again my children," said she, regarding the towers of the Temple, "I go to rejoin your father." She did not attempt, like Louis XVI., to justify herself before the people, nor to move them by any appeal to his memory. Her features did not wear, like those of her husband, the impression of the anticipated bliss of the just and the martyr, but that of disdain for mankind and a proper impatience to depart from life. She did not rush to heaven; she fled from earth, and bequeathed to it her indignation and its own remorse.

The executioner, trembling more than she, was seized with a tremour which checked his hand when disengaging the axe. The head of the queen fell. The assistant of the guillotine took it up by the hair and made the round of the scaffold, raising it in his right hand and showing it to the people. A long cry of "*Vive la Republique!*" saluted the decapitated member and already senseless features.

The Revolution believed itself avenged; it was only disgraced. This blood of a woman recoiled upon its glory, without cementing its liberty. Paris, however, felt less emotion at this murder than at that of the king. Public opinion affected an indifference to one of the most odious executions that disgraced the Republic. This sacrifice of a queen and a foreigner, amongst a people who had adopted her, had not even the compensation of tragical events — the remorse and grief of a nation.

XXV. Thus died this queen, frivolous in prosperity, sublime in misfortune, intrepid upon the scaffold, the idol of a court mutilated by the people, long the love, and afterwards the blind counsellor of royalty, and latterly the personal enemy of the Revolution. This Revolution, the queen knew neither how to foresee, to comprehend, nor to accept; she knew only how to irritate and to fear it. She took refuge in the court, in place of throwing herself into the bosom of the people. The people cast on her unjustly all the hatred with which they persecuted the ancient regime. They attached all the scandal and treason of the court to her name. Omnipotent, by her beauty and by her wit, over her husband, she invested him with her unpopularity, and dragged him, by her love, to his destruction. Her vacillating policy, following the impressions of the moment, by turns timid in defeat, and rash in success, neither knew how to recede nor to advance at the proper moment; and ended by converting itself into intrigues with the emigration party and with foreign powers. The charming and dangerous favourite of an antiquated, rather than the queen of a new, monarchy, she had neither the *prestige* of ancient royalty—respect; nor the *prestige* of a new reign—popularity; she knew only how to fascinate, to mislead, and to die. Called by a people to occupy a throne, that people did not even grant her a tomb. For we read upon the register of the general interments, in La Madeleine, "*For the coffin of the widow Capet, seven francs.*"

Behold the total of the life of a queen, and of the enormous sums expended during a prodigal reign for the splendour, the pleasures, and bounties of a woman who had possessed Versailles, Saint Cloud, and Trianon. When Providence desires to address men with the rude eloquence of royal vicissitudes, it speaks with a sign more powerful than the eloquent discourses of Seneca and Bossuet, and inscribes a vile cypher upon the register of a gravedigger!

## BOOK XLVII.

I. THE account of the trial and death of Marie Antoinette, which we were unwilling to interrupt, compels us to retrace a period of some weeks, to the 3d of October, to relate the fate of the Girondists.

From the 2d of June, the date of their fall and captivity, the Girondists had been the constant objects of hatred to the people of Paris. The Committee of Public Safety charged Amar, one of its most implacable members, to summon before their tribunal the twenty-three leaders of this party, who had been arrested on the 31st of May, and to accuse the seventy-three deputies suspected of moral complicity with the Girondists, and who had publicly and courageously protested against the violence of the people and the mutilation of the national representation. A profound mystery shrouded this measure of the committee, which, like the council of ten at Venice, reassured by its dissimulation and silence the victims whose escape it apprehended.

II. On the 3d of September, one of those splendid mornings which seem to summon us to contemplate the last fine days of the expiring year, seventy-three deputies of the centre, the remains of the party of Roland, Brissot, and Vergniaud, went to the Convention. They were struck by the unaccustomed display of armed men around the Tuileries, and in the interior of the Salle the galleries were more thronged than usual, whilst the features, the movements, and the gestures of the spectators betokened a feverish anxiety and expectation.

III. A deputy of the Montagne mounted the tribune, and announced that the *rapporteur* of the Committee of Public Safety, Amar, would soon appear and read his report concerning the twenty-two Girondists arrested on the 8th of June. This deputy, to allay the impatience of the spectators, pointed to the documents composing this report, which lay on the president's table, and which contained the life or death of so many proscribed men. Amar soon appeared himself. He was one of those men who profess moderate principles when the times are tranquil, and moderation is unattended with danger, and who atone, by servility and violence, for their past moderation, in times of violence and excess. Amar, an ancient member of the parliament of Grenoble, had at first opposed the Montagne, and now endeavoured to curry favour, by bringing criminals to justice, in order to avert suspicion and punishment from himself. His report, a long and calumnious summary of all the calumnies spread abroad against the Girondists, concluded —

First, By declaring guilty of conspiracy against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, the deputies Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Duperret, Carra, Mollevault, Gardien, Dufriche-Valazé, Vallée, Duprat, Sillery, Condorcet, Fauchet, Pontécoulant, Ducos, Boyer-Fonfrède, Gamon, Lasource, Lesterpt-Beauvais, Isnard, Duchâtel, Duval, Deverité, Mainvielle, Delahaye, Bonnet, Lacaze, Mazuyer, Savary, Hardy, Lehardy, Boileau, Rouyer, Antiboul, Bresson, Noël, Coustard, Andréi de la Corse, Grangeneuve, Vigée, and lastly, Phillipe Egalité, cidevant Duc d'Orleans, forgotten for a moment, — named by Billaud-Varennes, and carried by general acclamation.

Second, By declaring traitors to their country, conformably with the decree of the 8th July, the fugitive Girondist deputies, Buzot, Barbaroux, Gorsas, Lanjuinais, Salles, Louvet, Bergoing, Pétion, Guadet, Chasset, Chambon, Lidons, Valady, Fermon, Kervélégan, Henri Larivière, Rabaut-St.-Etienne, Lesage, Cussy, and Meillan.

Amar paused a moment after he had read these two articles; and the deputies of the centre, accomplices of the policy of the imprisoned and fugitive Girondists, breathed again, for they deemed themselves forgotten, and included in an amnesty. Nothing had as yet led them to believe that the sword hung over their heads; and they sorrowfully resigned themselves, to behold the proscription and death of the leaders of a party they could no longer save.

This illusion lasted but a few moments. Amar took up the documents composing the second part of his report; but previous to reading them, he demanded that the doors should be closed, and no one permitted to leave the Salle. The suspected members voted for this motion, lest they should give ground for accusation. Amar continued, — "Those who signed the protests of the 6th and 19th of June (against the 31st of May, the expulsion of the Girondists), who have not been brought before the revolutionary tribunal, shall be arrested and seals put on all their papers. A report on this subject will be drawn up by the Committee of General Safety."

He then read the names of the seventy-three deputies. A long silence after each name, made every heart beat with the hope of being omitted, and the apprehension of being named. The following were the names of those who heard the warrant for their death thus uttered by the mouth of Amar: — Lauze-Duperret, Cazeneuve, Laplaigne, Defermon, Rouault, Girault, Chastelin, Dugué-d'Assé, Lebreton, Dussaulx, Couppé, Saurine, Quëinnet, Salmon, the elder

Lacaze, Corbel, Guiter, Ferroux, Bailleul, Ruault, Obelin, Babey, Blad, Maisse, Peyre, Bohan, Fleury, Vernier, Grenot, Amyon, Laurenceot, Jarry, Rabaut, Fayolle, Aubry, Ribereau, Derazey, Mazuyer de Saône et Loire, Vallée, Lefebvre, Olivier Gerente, Royer, Duprat, Garithe, Devilleville, Varlet, Dubuse, Savary, Blanqui, Massa, Debray-Doublet, Delamarre, Faure, Hecquet, Deschamps, Lefebvre of la Seine inférieure, Serre, Laurence, Saladin, Mercier, Daunou, Périés, Vincent, Tournier, Rouzet, Blaux, Blaviel, Marboz, Estadentz, Bresson des Vosges, Moysset, Saint Prix, and Gamon.

The decree of accusation was unanimously carried. Some of the deputies included in it strove to obtain a hearing, but their voices were drowned, and they were packed in silence, like sheep going to the slaughter, in the narrow space of the bar. A few members of the Montagne demanded that the names of their enemies should be added to the list of the proscribed. At the end of the sitting, the accused deputies were confined in the different prisons of Paris, and chiefly in La Force.

Their trial, with that of the other Girondists, was loudly demanded, — and their trial was their death. Robespierre employed, with more courage than he displayed for so many other victims, his influence to save them ; and he did not hesitate to resist the clamour of the people and to offend his colleagues, to rescue the seventy-three from the impatience of their enemies. The future shows that he reserved them as a counterpoise to the omnipotence of the Montagne, at the period when he sought to rule alone in the Convention.

The fate of the deputies, imprisoned since the 31st of May, was clearly pronounced by Amar. The Montagne, at the outset, satisfied with its victory, and Robespierre and Danton ashamed of so many odious and impolitic murders, strove to cause them to be forgotten in vain. Not a scaffold was erected in Paris, but the people demanded why it was not for the Girondists : and the Committee of Public Safety feared to afford this ground for complaint to the more ardent Montagnards and the Commune. The Jacobins had wrested the head of Louis XVI. from the Gironde, and the demagogism of Hébert, Pache, and Audouin, called on the Jacobins to give the Republic the heads of their thirty-two colleagues. Robespierre yielded with regret, and Garat, the minister of the interior, came to entreat him to save them. "Do not speak of it again," said Robespierre; "I cannot save them: there are periods in revolutions when to live is a crime, and when men must know how to surrender their heads when demanded. And mine also will, perhaps, be required of me," added he, seizing it in both hands, like a man who throws down a burden. "You shall see if I dispute it."

IV. Vergniaud, Gensonné, Ducos, Fonfrède, Valazé, Carra, Fauchet, Lasource, Sillery, Gorsas, and their colleagues, had remained voluntary prisoners at Paris. Condorcet had escaped, by timely flight, the pursuit of the Commune and the warrant issued for his arrest.

Roland had fled, and concealed himself in the environs of Rouen after the imprisonment of his wife. Brissot, called the leader of the party since he had been its organ, and had given it its name, had also fled. On his arrival at Chartres, his native place, he found no friends, and left the town alone on foot, in disguise, and, furnished with a false passport, strove to gain, by circuitous and unfrequented routes, the Swiss frontiers or the departments of the south. Recognised and arrested at Moulins, he had been brought back to Paris and cast into prison, where he languished during five months.

V. The captivity of the Girondists from the 31st of May had followed, as regards its rigour or indulgence, the oscillations of public opinion. At first almost nominal, and as though ashamed of itself, it was merely confinement in their own house under the custody of a *gen d'arme*. The opportunities of escape were frequent. Surrounded by their families, visited by their friends, served by their own domestics, furnished with money and false passports, it seemed that these measures of tolerance were purposely adopted to favour their flight. The Montagne was rather embarrassed by, than jealous of its victims; but after the disasters of the army of the north, the successes of La Vendée, the insurrection of Calvados, Marseilles, Lyons, and Toulon; the proclamation of the Terror, the trial of Custine, the execution of the queen, and the law against suspected persons — their captivity became more rigorous. They were first confined in the Abbaye, then the Luxembourg, and then the Carmes, united by the same crime and the same fall. For a length of time, confounded with those suspected of royalism and federalism, the Girondists found themselves associated by chance — that blind avenger of the conquered and the conquerors — with the victims of their policy, the vanquished of the 10th of August, the friends of La Fayette and Dumouriez, the servitors of royalty, the moderators of the Revolution, nobles, priests, magistrates — such men as Barnave, Bailly, and Malesherbes.

The Girondists, inflexible in their republicanism, retained a revolutionary attitude, and neither affected to lament their opinions nor the humiliation of their fall, and associated themselves with the Convention in all its acts of patriotic energy and severity against the royalists, and only separated themselves from what they termed its humiliation and its crimes. They formed in the prison a distinct group, which was not a rupture, but a schism in the republic. Their names, celebrity, youth, and eloquence, inspired their enemies with curiosity, their fellow-captives with respect, and their very gaolers with courtesy.

Something of their character of representatives of the people, of their *prestige*, and their power had followed them even in their dungeon; and, though prisoners, they yet reigned by the recollections or the admiration that enshrined them.

VI. When their trial was decided on, this captivity became more strict. They were imprisoned for a few days in the Carmelite convent, in the Rue de Vaugeraud, a monastery converted into a prison, and rendered sinister by the recollections and the bloody traces of the massacres of September. The lower floors, crowded with prisoners, only left the Girondists a narrow space between the roofs, consisting of a dark passage, and three cells, opening one into another, and resembling the *Piombi* of Venice. A small staircase, in a corner of the building, led to them; several wickets had been formed on the stair, and a single massive door, studded with iron, gave access to these cells. This door, closed since 1793, and opened for us, presented the cells and displayed the images and thoughts of the captives as perfect and intact as the day they left to go to death. No step, no hand, has effaced these vestiges of them. The written traces of proscribed members of all the other parties of the Republic are mingled with those of the Girondists; and the names of friends and foes, executioners and victims, are inscribed on the same wall.

VII. Above the principal door was inscribed, in large letters, "*Liberty, Equality, or Death!*"—the usual inscription on all public monuments at that period. This led into a large room, in which the prisoners took their meals; on the left was a small chamber, in which the younger of the Girondists slept. These two apartments were lighted by two ungrated windows, which looked on the large gardens belonging to the convent. The eye first rested on the fountain, which seemed as though striving eternally to efface the blood of the priests massacred near its basin, then on an immense horizon on the north and west of Paris. Nothing broke the outline, save the spire of the clock tower of the Luxembourg, the dome of the Invalides opposite, and on the left, by the two towers of a half-destroyed church. The light, the silence, the serenity of this prospect gave the captives the image of the country, the illusions of liberty, and the calmness of contemplation. The walls and ceiling of this chamber, covered with plaster, offered the prisoners, in the place of paper, of which they had been deprived, a page on which to engrave their last thoughts with their knives or write them with their pencils. These ideas, generally expressed in short and proverbial maxims, or Latin verses, cover the walls to this day, and render them the depositories and revealers of the last thoughts and hopes of the Gironde. Almost all are written in blood, and retain its hues, and are a hymn to constancy, a defiance of death, or an appeal to immortality. In one place we read:—

"Quand il n'a pu sauver la liberté de Rome,
Caton est libre encore et sait mourir en homme."

In another:—

"Justum ac tenacem propositi virum,
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni
Mente quatit solidâ."

Higher:—

"Cui virtus non deest
Ille
Nunquam omnino miser."

Lower: —

"La vraie liberté est celle de l'âme."

On the side, a religious inscription, supposed to be in the hand of Fauchet: —

"Souvenez-vous que vous êtes appellés non pour causer et pour être oisifs, mais pour souffrir et travailler."—*Imitation de Jésus Christ.*

On another part of the wall is a regret given to a beloved name, which was not revealed even in death: —

"Je meurs pour ——— ————.
"MONTALEMBERT."

On the beam: —

"Dignum certe deo spectaculum fortem virum cum calamitate colluctantem."

Above: —

"Quels solides appuis dans le malheur suprême !
J'ai pour moi ma vertu, l'équité, Dieu lui-même."

Beneath: —

"Le jour n'est pas plus pur que le fond de mon cœur."

In the recess of the window: —

"Cui virtus non deest
Ille
Non omnino miser."

"Rebus in arduis facile est contemnere vitam."

"Dulce et decorum pro patriâ mori."

"Non omnis moriar."

"Summum crede nefas animam præferre pudori."

In large letters of blood, in the writing of Vergniaud: —

"Potius mori quam fœdari."

A multitude of inscriptions and initials, strophes and incompleted ideas, attest the stoical intrepidity of these men, fed from the purest sources of antiquity, and seeking consolation, not in the hope of life, but the contemplation of death.

VIII. The Girondists were removed during the night to their last place of detention, the Conciergerie, where the queen was still confined. Thus the same roof covered the fallen queen and the men who had hurled her from her throne on the 10th of August — the victim of royalty and the victims of the republic. Here they met Brissot, who had for a long time been confined at the Abbaye, and those of the colleagues who, like Duperret and Riouffe, had been brought back from the south or Bretagne.

They were placed in a separate part of the prison. Their cells were contiguous, and one contained eighteen beds. The impossibility of escaping from these walls, defended by triple doors, iron bolts, and sentinels, had led their gaolers to soften, in some measure, the severity of their imprisonment, and to allow them the use of paper and ink. They read the public journals, and conversed, through the wicket, with their wives, children, and friends.

The brother-in-law of Vergniaud, M. Alluaud, came from Limoges to bring him some money; for Vergniaud was in a state of literal destitution. M. Alluaud had brought his son, a child of ten years, whose features recalled to the prisoner those of his beloved sister. The child, seeing his uncle imprisoned like a malefactor, his cheeks sunken, hair in disorder, unshaven, and his garments hanging in tatters, burst into tears, and clung to his father's knees. "My child," said the captive, taking him on his lap, "look well at me; when you are a man, you can say that you saw Vergniaud, the founder of the republic, at the most glorious period and in the most splendid costume he ever wore — that in which he suffered the persecution of wretches, and in which he prepared to die for liberty!" The child remembered these words, and repeated them, fifty years afterwards, to the author of this work.

IX. At the hours of exercise the other prisoners flocked around the Girondists, to contemplate and listen to them. Their conversations turned on the events of the day, the danger of the country, the difficulties in the way of liberty, and the blots on the republic. They conversed like men who have no longer any occasion to temporise, and who see their work dishonoured and stained with blood. Their eloquence, which had lost nothing of its patriotism, contracted within these walls something of a prophetic character; their impartial voice seemed to make itself heard from the tomb. Brissot read to his colleagues the pages in which he bequeathed their justification to posterity. Gensonné preserved the bitterness of his sarcasm, and avenged himself on his enemies by his contempt for them. Lasource illuminated the abysses of anarchy by the fire of his ardent imagination, and consoled himself for the fall of his party by the general ruin of Europe. Carra constantly formed new combinations and new divisions of territories between the powers of Europe. Fauchet accused himself, with sincere and manly repentance, with having abandoned his faith, and proved that religion alone could guide the steps of liberty. Sillery was silent, deeming silence more dignified than complaint in his last moments. He, like Fauchet, returned to his religious belief and observances. Both frequently conversed with a venerable priest, their fellow-prisoner in the Conciergerie. This was the Abbé Emery, ancient superior of the congregation of St. Sulpice, of whom Fouquier-Tinville said, "We let him live because he prevents more tumult and more complaint in the prison, by his gentleness and advice, than the *gens d'armes* and the guillotine put together."

Ducos and Fonfrède, young men whose natural gaiety the gloom of a prison and the approach of death could not damp, wrote verses, affected the light-heartedness of happier times, and only recovered their gravity and regret in the confidences of their heroic friendship, and their mutual apprehension for each other's fall. Valazé looked upon the approach of death as the consummation of the sacrifice he had long since made of his life to his country. He felt that new doctrines must be watered with the blood of their earliest apostles, and he rejoiced at shedding his, for he possessed the fanaticism of devotion, and the impatience of martyrdom.

A few hours before the trial, he gave the young Riouffe a pair of scissors, which he had concealed. "There," said he, with an accent of irony, which Riouffe did not until afterwards comprehend, "it is said that this is a dangerous weapon, and they fear lest we should attempt self-destruction." He bore on his person a surer weapon, and this gift was a Socratic raillery of his foes.

X. Vergniaud appeared as careless of the judgment of posterity as of his life. Calm, grave, natural, sometimes mirthful, he never wrote, and conversed but little. A pilot, torn from the helm during a tempest, he reposed himself on the deep amidst the agitation of the vessel, which he no longer governed. His strong mind, whose very strength rendered it sometimes too inactive, and his prophetic yet idle genius, left him but little care for himself. Alone and silent, on his bed or on the spot allotted for exercise, he occasionally illuminated a difficult theme under discussion by one of those flashes of eloquence, no less majestic in the dungeon than the tribune of the senate. Eloquence with him was not an art, but a part of himself; he was certain of always bearing it with him, and of employing it when requisite; and he esteemed it as a weapon to be employed in the combat, and not to adorn him before time and posterity.

He often conversed with Fauchet, and without sharing his faith yet enjoyed the truths of theories and hopes of Christianity, which he respected as the founder respects gold, though alloyed. He did not desire the destruction, but the gradual, entire, and prudent purgation of religion. "To disengage God from his image," said he, "is the last task of philosophy and the Revolution." Vergniaud thought much more highly of the talents of Fauchet, since his vague and declamatory style had become vivified and sanctified by the return of religious feelings to the heart of the bishop of Calvados, and the presentiment of martyrdom.

Such was Vergniaud in captivity. He only appeared more unmoved than his companions, because he was the most reflective and the greatest. The evening before the day of the trial of the Girondists, he threw away the poison he had for five months constantly carried about him, in order to share the fate of his friends, and accompany them to the scaffold.

XI. On the 22d of October their *acte d'accusation* was read to them, and their trial commenced on the 26th. Never since the Knights Templars had a party appeared more numerous, more illustrious, or more eloquent. The renown of the accused, their long possession of power, their present danger, and that love of vengeance which arises in men's hearts at the spectacle of mighty reverses of fortune, had collected a crowd in the precincts of the revolutionary tribunal. The greater portion of the judges and jury had been the friends and clients of the Girondists, and were the more resolved to condemn them in order to purge themselves from any suspicion of complicity.

A strong armed force surrounded the gates of the Conciergerie and the Palais-de-Justice. The cannon, the uniforms, the sentinels, the *gens d'armes*, the naked sabres, all announced one of those political crises in which a trial is a battle, and justice an executioner.

At ten o'clock the accused were brought in. They were twenty-two; and this fatal number, inscribed in the earliest lists of the proscription, on the 31st of May, had been maintained in spite of the flight or death of several of the twenty-two deputies first marked by the Convention for destruction. The number was completed by adding to the Gironde several members, strangers to their faction, as Boileau, Mainvielle, Bonneville, Antiboul, in order that the people, seeing the same number, might believe they beheld the same plot, detest the same crime, and punish the conspirators.

XII. At eleven o'clock they entered the salle d'audience, between two files of *gens d'armes*, and took their places in silence on the prisoners' bench. The crowd, who gazed on them as they passed, inquired their names, and sought in their faces the imaginary imprint of the crimes ascribed to them, but yet wondered that features youthful and so serene should conceal so much perfidy. Ducos was the first to take his seat: scarcely twenty-eight years of age, his black and piercing eyes, the flexibility of his features, and the elegance of his figure revealed one of those ardent temperaments in whom the vivacity of impressions prevents them from being profound, and in whom every thing is light, even heroism. Fonfrède, who was younger than his brother-in-law, followed him; but a darker shade of melancholy covered his features. The eyes of these two young Girondists rested with more assurance on the crowd, and more confidence on the jury. Ducos and Fonfrède had not shared at the Convention and the Committee of Twelve either the prudence of Condorcet and Brissot, or the moderation of Vergniaud. Enthusiastic and fiery as the Montagne, they had repeatedly blamed the revolutionary inactivity of their party. They only hated in Danton the blood of September, for his eloquence carried them away, and he would have been their leader, had not Vergniaud existed.

XIII. They were followed by Boileau, juge-de-paix at Avalon, a man of weak mind, who had accidentally enrolled himself in the ranks of the Gironde and now perceived his error; he now adopted with tardy repentance the triumphant opinions and pitiless patriotism of the Convention.

Mainvielle followed him, the youthful deputy of Marseilles, of the same age as Ducos, and of an equally striking but more masculine beauty than Barbaroux. He had dyed his hands in the blood of Avignon, his native city, to sever it from the papal party, and cast it into the arms of France and the Revolution. Accused by Marat of *moderatisme*, this charge had confounded him with the Gironde.

Duprat, his countryman and friend, accompanied him to the tribunal. After them came Antiboul, a native of Saint Tropez, and deputy of Var. Guilty of courageous humanity at the trial of Louis XVI., Antiboul had consented to proscribe him as a king, not to condemn him as a man, and his conscience was his crime. He was followed by Duchâtel, deputy of Deux Sèvres, aged twenty-seven years, who had been carried to the tribunal almost in a dying state wrapped in blankets, to vote against the death of *the Tyrant*, and who was termed, from this act and this costume, the *Spectre of Tyranny*. The martial expression of his features, and the grace of his figure, attracted all eyes.

Carra, deputy of Sâone and Loire, at the Convention, sat next to Duchâtel. His vulgar physiognomy, the stoop of his shoulders, his large head and disordered attire, recalled Marat, and contrasted with the stature and beauty of Duchâtel. Learned, confused, fanatic, declamatory, impetuous alike in attack or resistance, he had sided with the Gironde to combat the excesses of the people without disavowing the republic. His journal had been the echo of their doctrines and eloquence, and the echo was destined to perish with the voices.

A man of rustic appearance and garb, Duperret, the involuntary victim of Charlotte Corday, sat next to Carra. He was of noble birth, but cultivated with his own hands the small estate of his forefathers. Devoid of ambition and vanity, the Revolution had taken him, like Cincinnatus, from the plough. He had been elected as the most honest man, and now paid the fine of his good name. He was in his forty-seventh year, and was followed by Gardien, deputy of La Vienne, a man of the same age and appearance. Gardien had voted against the king's death, belonged to the Committee of Twelve, and displayed the energy of a good citizen. Then came Lacaze, deputy of Libourne and Lesterpt-Beauvais, deputy of Haute Vienne, both friends of Gensonné, passionate admirers of his eloquence and courage, and proud of being accused of the same virtues as himself.

Gensonné followed them. He was a man of five-and-thirty, but the ripeness of his intellect, the importance of his part, and the resolution that dictated his opinions, gave his features that look of energy and decision that belongs to maturer age. His hair carefully powdered and brushed back, heightened his naturally lofty forehead. He raised his head with a look of pride approaching defiance, and a sarcastic smile played around his mouth. His elegant and carefully chosen costume, made in proscribed shape and stuff, added to the already unpopular character of the physiognomy of Gensonné.

A doctor of Dinan, Lehardy, deputy of Morbihan, a man devoid of any other ambition than that of the love of his fellow creatures, and any renown save that of his death, followed Gensonné.

Next came Lasource, a man of high-flown language and tragical imagination. His unpowdered and closely cut hair, his black coat, his austere demeanour, and grave and ascetic features, recalled the minister of the Holy Gospel, and those Puritans of the time of Cromwell, who sought for God in liberty, and in their trial, martyrdom. Vigée, an unknown man, who had not long arrived at the Convention, and who had been ensnared by his earliest votes, followed Lasource unnoticed. After Lasource and Vigée came Sillery, the ancient friend of the Duc d'Orleans, accused of inspiring him, through his wife, with ambitious desires and ideas of ascending the throne. Sillery had quitted his master, prior to the death of the king, for he felt his honest soul recoil from regicide, and he had stopped,—not as a timid man who repents in silence and flies to obscurity, but as a resolute man who braves and faces the danger. A great and pure republic appeared to him a nobler ambition than a royalty raised from a sea of blood, and he joined the Girondists, still attached to the Duc d'Orleans, but advising him secretly to follow his example, and predicting his future fate. The military appearance of Sillery, his patrician costume and his haughty features, revealed in him the gentleman who despises the populace. The expression of his face was that of happiness: he seemed to rejoice at escaping from the difficulties of his situation, and the reproaches of the past, by a noble death amidst his friends and the *élite* of the republic.

Valazé seemed like a soldier under fire; his conscience told him it was his duty to die, and he died. His costume preserved, from the manner in which he wore it, a semblance of uniform.

The Abbé Fauchet came immediately after Valazé. He was in his fiftieth year; but the beauty of his features, the elevation of his stature, and the freshness of his colour, made him appear much younger. His dress, from its colour and make, befitted his sacred profession, and his hair was so cut as to show the tonsure of the Christian priest, so long covered by the bonnet rouge of the revolutionist. His features wore no other expression than that of his soul,—enthusiasm. The tribunal was to Fauchet a sanctuary to which he came to confess his faults, and expiate them by the sacrifice of his blood.

XIV. Brissot was the last but one. He was a man of middle age, small stature, and wan features, lighted up by intelligence, and ennobled by an intrepid determination. Clad with the affected simplicity of the philosopher or man of nature, his threadbare black coat was but a piece of cloth cut mathematically to cover the limbs of a man. His hair, cut short in front, and floating on his neck behind, made him resemble the American Quaker, his model. Brissot held in his hand a pencil and paper, on which he every moment made some notes.

XV. Last came Vergniaud, the greatest and most illustrious of them all. All Paris knew, and had beheld him in the tribune, and was now curious to gaze not only on the orator on a level with his enemies, but the man reduced to take his place on the bench of the accused. Men expected from him efforts and bursts of eloquence, which would render his trial worthy the times of Demosthenes or Cicero. The *prestige* of Vergniaud still followed him, and he was one of those men from whom every thing, even impossibilities, are expected. A murmur of interest and compassion burst from the populace as he advanced, for he was no longer Vergniaud of the Convention, but the prisoner of the people. His muscles, relaxed by confinement and mental suffering, no longer defined the somewhat massive outline of his limbs; his step had become heavy, his eye dim, and his swollen and livid cheeks had contracted the palor of a prison. His brow streamed with perspiration, which glued his long hair on his forehead. He was dressed in the same blue coat, with large skirts and collar, which he always wore at the Convention, but which, grown too small, burst and cracked at each movement, like a borrowed garment. Although Vergniaud entered the last, his companions made room for him on the centre of the bench, as a leader around whom they gloried in rallying. The *gens d'armes* allowed them to be seated.

XVI. The *acte d'accusation* of Fouquier-Tinville, concerted, it is said, with Robespierre and Saint Just, was but a long and bitter reproduction of the pamphlet of Camille Desmoulins, called *History of the Faction of the Gironde.* It was the history of calumny, written by the calumniator, and received as evidence by the executioner. Nought was added. Hate had no need to be convinced, but had already condemned them.

The judges called as witnesses the bitterest enemies of the accused. Pache, Chabot, Hébert, Chaumette, Montaut, Fabre d'Eglantine, Léonard Bourdon, and the Jacobin Deffieux, read, instead of evidence, long invectives against the Girondists, which the latter debated in few words. Instead of elevating the defence to the height of their situation and their minds, and confessing the glorious crime of wishing to moderate revolution in order to render it irreproachable and invincible, they contented themselves with shielding themselves individually from the blows of their adversaries; and even Vergniaud seemed rather to excuse than glory in his opinions. Brissot, more resolute and more proud, victoriously refuted Chabot, and contended to the last with his accusers. Sillery confessed his real crime — the vote against the death of the king, and gloried in it. No speech worthy a record in history burst from the lips of these men. The fear of compromising a remnant of life sealed their lips, and they only became great again when all hope was gone.

XVII. The trial, however, which had lasted a week, and the demand of Gensonné, in the name of all the accused, to be heard in defence, wearied the judges and jury, and alarmed the Montagne. Public opinion, which is so soon softened and changed at the aspect of its victims, began to lean towards clemency.

These first symptoms of a return of popular feeling to the Gironde alarmed the Commune. Auduin, Pache's son-in-law, who had formerly been a priest, and was now one of the church's bitterest persecutors, called on the Committee of Safety to close the debate by allowing the president to declare that sufficient evidence had been heard. The jury, constrained by this declaration, closed the debate on the 30th of October, at eight o'clock in the evening. All the accused were declared guilty of having conspired against the unity and indivisibility of the republic, and condemned to death.

At this sentence a cry of astonishment and horror burst from the accused; the greater number, and especially Boileau, Ducos, Fonfrède, Antiboul, Mainvielle, expected an acquittal. One of the accused, who had made a motion with his hand as though to tear his garments, slipped from his seat on to the floor. It was Valazé. "What, Valazé, are you losing your courage?" said Brissot, striving to support him. "No, I am dying," returned Valazé; and he expired, his hand on the poignard with which he had pierced his heart.

At this spectacle silence instantly prevailed, and the example of Valazé made the young Girondists blush for their momentary weakness.

Boileau alone protesting against the sentence which confounded him with the Gironde, cast his hat into the air, exclaiming, "I am innocent; I am a Jacobin; I am a Montagnard." The sarcasms of the spectators were the sole reply, and, instead of pity, he only met with contempt. Brissot inclined his head on his breast, and appeared immersed in reflection. Fauchet and Lasource clasped their hands, and raised their eyes to heaven. Vergniaud, seated on the highest bench, gazed on the tribunal, his colleagues, and the crowd, with a look that seemed to scan the scene, and to seek in the past an example of such a decision of destiny, and such ingratitude on the part of the people. Sillery cast away his crutch, and exclaimed, "This is the most glorious day of my life." Fonfrède threw his arms round Ducos, and burst into tears. "Mon ami," said he, "I cause your death, but console yourself, we shall die together."

XVIII. At this moment a cry was heard, and a young man in vain strove to force his way through the crowd. "Let me fly from this spectacle," cried he, covering his eyes with his hands. "Wretch that I am, it is I who have killed them. It is my '*Brissot devoilé*' which has killed them. I cannot bear the sight of my work. I feel their blood fall on the hand that has denounced them." This young man was Camille Desmoulins, inconsiderate in his pity as his hatred, and whom the crowd detained and silenced as though he had been a child.

XIX. It was eleven o'clock at night. After a moment's pause, occasioned by the unexpectedness of the sentence, and the emotion of the prisoners, the sitting was closed amidst cries of *Vive la Republique!*

The Girondists as they quitted their places, assembled round the corpse of Valazé, extended on a bench; touched it respectfully, to assure themselves that life was extinct, and then, as though seized with an electric inspiration by contact with the republican who had perished by his own hand, they exclaimed simultaneously, "We die innocent. *Vive la Republique!*" Some of them threw amongst the crowd handfulls of *assignats*, not, as it has been supposed, to excite the people to revolt and disorder, but, like the Romans, to bequeath to them wealth no longer useful to themselves. The populace eagerly collected these legacies of the dying, and appeared touched with pity. Hermann ordered the *gens d'armes* to remove the prisoners; and their presence of mind, which had for a moment forsaken them, now returned with the conviction of their fate.

In fulfilment of the promise they had made the other prisoners in the Conciergerie to inform them of their fate by the echoes of their voices, they burst on quitting the tribunals, into the *Marseillaise hymn* :—

> " Allons, enfans de la patrie,
> Le jour de gloire est arrivé!"

and sang the chorus with an energy that made the vaults ring again.

At these sounds the prisoners awoke and comprehended that the accused sang their own death song ; and tears, acclamations, and sobs replied to their strains. They were all confined for this their last night on earth in the large dungeon, the waiting-room of death. The tribunal had just decreed that the yet warm corpse of Valazé "*should be carried back to prison, conveyed in the same cart with his accomplices to the scaffold, and interred with them.*" The only sentence perhaps that ever punished the dead.

Four *gens d'armes* followed the column of the condemned, bearing on a litter the bleeding corpse, and laid it down in a corner of the dungeon. The Girondists came one by one to kiss the hand of their friend, and then covered his visage with his mantle. They were so soon to rejoin him that their adieus were rather respectful than sad. "To-morrow," said they : and they recruited their strength for this morrow.

XX. It was near at hand, for it was already midnight. The deputy Bailleul, their colleague at the Assembly, proscribed like them, but who had escaped the proscription, and was concealed in Paris, had promised to send them from without, on the day of their trial, a last repast, triumphant or funereal, according to the sentence ; to rejoice at their freedom, or commemorate their death. Bailleul, though invisible, kept his promise through the agency of a friend. The funereal supper was set out in the large dungeon ; the daintiest meats, the choicest wines, the rarest flowers and numerous flambeaus decked the oaken table of the prison. The last luxury of an eternal farewell,—prodigality of dying men, who have no need to save aught for the following day. The Girondists took their places in silence, to recruit their exhausted strength, and then await the day. A priest, then a young man but destined to survive them more than half a century, the Abbé Lambert, the friend of Brissot and the other Girondists, who had obtained admittance into the

Conciergerie to console or bless the dying, awaited in the corridor the conclusion of the supper; the doors were open, and he observed and noted down in his mind the gestures, the sighs, and the words of those assembled there; and it is to him that posterity owes the greater portion of these details, — faithful as conscience, and exact as the memory of a last friend.

XXI. The repast was prolonged till dawn. Vergniaud, seated at the centre of the table, presided, with the same calm dignity he had presided at the Convention, on the night of the 10th of August. Vergniaud was of all the one who least regretted life, — for he had gained sufficient glory, and left neither father, mother, wife, nor children behind him. The others formed groups, with the exception of Brissot, who sat at the end of the table, eating but little, and not uttering a word.

For a long time nothing in their features or conversation indicated that this repast was the prelude to death. They ate and drank with appetite, but sobriety; but when the table was cleared, and nothing left except the fruit, wine, and flowers, the conversation became alternately animated, noisy, and grave, as the conversation of careless men, whose thoughts and tongues are freed by wine. Mainvielle, Antiboul, Duchâtel, Fonfrède, Ducos, and all those young men who could not feel themselves sufficiently aged in an hour to die on the morrow, burst into gay and joyous sallies; but their language, contrasted with approaching death, profaned the sanctity of their last hours, and threw a glacial expression over the false gaiety of these young men.

Brissot, Fauchet, Sillery, Lasource, Lehardy, Carra, strove sometimes to reply to these noisy provocations, but the misplaced gaiety of these young men found no echo in the hearts of their elder colleagues. Vergniaud, more grave, and more really intrepid in his gravity, gazed on Ducos and Fonfrède with a smile in which indulgence was mingled with compassion.

Towards the morning the conversation became more solemn. Brissot spoke prophetically of the misfortunes of the republic, deprived of her most virtuous and eloquent citizens. "How much blood will it require to wash out our own," cried he. They were silent for a moment, and appeared terrified at the phantom of the future evoked by Brissot. "My friends," replied Vergniaud, "we have killed the tree by pruning it. It was too aged: Robespierre cuts it. Will he be more fortunate than ourselves? No; the soil is too weak to nourish the roots of civic liberty: this people is too childish to wield its laws without hurting itself. It will return to its kings as babes return to their toys. We were deceived as to the age in which we were born, and in which we die for the freedom of the world," continued he. "We deemed ourselves at Rome, and we were at Paris. But revolutions are like those crises which blanch in a single night the hair of a man,—they soon bring nations to maturity. Our blood is sufficiently warm to fertilise the soil of the republic. Let us not carry away with us the future; and let us bequeath to the people hope, in exchange for the death we shall receive at their hands."

XXII. A long silence followed this speech of Vergniaud's and the conversation turned from earth to heaven. "What shall we be doing to-morrow at this time?" said Ducos, who always mingled mirth with the most serious subjects. Each replied, according to his nature. "We shall sleep after the fatigues of the day," replied some. The scepticism of the age corrupted even their last thoughts, and only promised the destruction of the soul to those men who were about to die for the immortality of a human idea. The immortality of the soul, and the sublime conjectures of that future life to which they were so near, offered a more fitting theme for their last moment. Their voices sank, their accents became more solemn. Fonfrède, Gensonné, Carra, Fauchet, and Brissot, spoke in terms in which breathed all the divinity of human reason and all the certainty of conscience on the mysterious problems of the immaterial destiny of the human mind.

Vergniaud, who had hitherto been silent, now appealed to by his friends, joined in the debate. "Never," said the eye-witness whom we have before cited, and who had often admired him in the tribune, "never had his look, his gesture, his language, and his voice, more profoundly affected his hearers."

The words of Vergniaud were lost, their impression alone remained.

After having united all the moral proofs of the existence of a being, whom he termed the Supreme Being, — after having demonstrated the necessity of a providence, the consequence of the excellence of this Supreme Being, and the necessity of justice, a divine debt of the Creator, towards his creatures, — after having cited, from Socrates to Cicero, and from Cicero to all the just who have perished, the universal belief of all peoples and philosophers, a proof above all others, since there is in nature an instinct of a future existence, as strong as the instinct of a present life, — after having carried, even to enthusiasm, the certainty of a continuation of existence, after this present state, which is not destroyed but metamorphosed by death, — "But," added he, in more eloquent language, exalted even to lyricism, and bringing the subject to the condition of his fellow-prisoners, to deduce his strongest proof from themselves, "are not we ourselves the best proof of immortality? We, calm, serene, unmoved in the presence of the corpse of our friend — of our own corpse — discussing, like a peaceful assembly of philosophers, on the light or darkness which shall succeed our last sigh; dying, more happy than Danton, who will live, — than Robespierre, who will triumph. Whence then arises this calmness in our discourse, and this serenity in our souls? Is it not in us the result of the feeling that we have performed a great duty towards humanity? What is our country — what is humanity? Is it this mass of animated dust which is to-day man, to-morrow a heap of clay? No, it is not for this living clod of earth, it is for the spirit of humanity and our fatherland that we die. What are we ourselves but atoms of this collective spirit of the human race? Each of the men who compose our species, has an immortal spirit, imperishable, and confounded with that soul of his country and mankind, for which it is so sweet, so glorious, to devote ourselves — to suffer, and to die. It is for this reason," continued he, "that we are not sublime dupes, but beings who obey their moral instinct; and who, when they have fulfilled this duty, will live, suffer, or enjoy in immortality the destinies of humanity. Let us die then, not with confidence, but certainty. Our conscience is our guide in this mighty trial; our judge, the great Eternal, whose name is sought for by ages, and to whose designs we are subservient as tools which he breaks in the work, but whose fragments fall at his feet. Death is but the greatest act of life, since it gives birth to a higher state of existence. Were it not thus," added he, more solemnly, "there would be something greater than God. It would be the just man, immolating himself uselessly and hopelessly for his country. This supposition is a folly of blasphemy, and I repel it with contempt or horror. No! Vergniaud is not greater than God, but God is more just than Vergniaud, and will not, to-morrow, suffer him to ascend a scaffold, but to justify and avenge him in future ages."

Fauchet made an eloquent discourse on the Passion, comparing their death to Calvary. They were all much moved, and many wept.

Vergniaud reconciled, in a few words, all the different opinions. "Let us believe what we will," said he, "but let us die certain of our life and the price of our death. Let us each sacrifice what we possess, the one his doubt, the other his faith, all of us our blood for liberty. When man offers himself as a victim to Heaven, what more can he give?"

XXIII. Daylight began to stream in at the windows. "Let us go to bed," said Ducos: "life is so trifling a thing that it is not worth the hour of sleep we lose in regretting it." "Let us watch," said Lasource to Sillery and Fauchet; "eternity is so certain and so terrible that a thousand lives would not suffice to prepare for it." They rose from table, and re-entered their chambers, where most of them threw themselves on their beds.

Thirteen remained in the larger dungeon, some conversed in whispers, others wept, some slept. At eight o'clock they were allowed to walk about in the corridors. The Abbé Lambert, the pious friend of Brissot, who had passed the night at the door of their dungeon, was still awaiting permission to communicate with them. Brissot, perceiving him, sprang forward and clasped him in his arms. The priest offered him the assistance of his ministry, to soften or sanctify death; but Brissot gratefully but firmly refused. "Do you know any thing more holy than the death of an honest man, who dies for having refused the blood of his fellow-creatures to wretches?" said he. The abbé said nothing more.

Lasource, who had witnessed the interview, approached Brissot. "Do you believe," said he to him, "in the immortality of your soul, and the providence of God?" "I do believe in them," returned Brissot; "and it is because I believe in them that I am about to die." "Well," replied Lasource, "there is but a step from thence to religion. I, the minister of another faith, have never so much admired the ministers of yours, as in these dungeons into which they bring the pardon of Heaven to the condemned. In your place I should confess." Brissot made no reply, but joined Vergniaud, Gensonné, and the younger prisoners, most of whom declined the aid of the priest. Some sat on the stone parapet, others walked about arm in arm; some knelt at the priest's feet, and received absolution after a brief confession of their faults. All awaiting calmly the signal for their departure, and resembling by their attitude a halt previous to the battle.

The Abbé Emery, although a nonjuring priest, had obtained permission to see Fauchet at the grating that separated the court from the corridor, and there listened to and absolved the bishop of Calvados. Fauchet, absolved and penitent, listened to the confession of Sillery, and bestowed on his friend the divine pardon he had just received.

At ten o'clock the executioners came to prepare them for the scaffold. Gensonné, picking up a lock of his black hair, gave it to the Abbé Lambert, and begged him to give it to his wife, whose residence he named. "Tell her it is all I can send her of my remains, and that my last thoughts in death were hers." Vergniaud drew his watch from his pocket, scratched with a pen some initials, and the date of the 30th of October, in the inside of the gold case, and gave it to one of the assistants to transmit it to a young girl to whom he was tenderly attached, and whom it is said he had intended to marry.

All had a name, a regret, a friendship; all had some souvenir of themselves to send to those they left on earth. The hope of a remembrance here is the last tie that binds the dying to life.

These mysterious legacies were all duly delivered.

XXIV. When all was ready, and the last lock of hair had fallen on the stones of the dungeon, the executioners and *gens d'armes* made the condemned march in a column to the court of the palace, where five carts, surrounded by an immense crowd, awaited them. The moment they emerged from the Conciergerie the Girondists burst into the *Marseillaise*, laying stress on these verses, which contained a double meaning —

> "*Contre nous de la tyrannie*
> *L'étendard sanglant est levé.*"

From this moment they ceased to think of themselves, in order to think of the example of the death of republicans they wished to leave the people. Their voices sank at the end of each verse, only to rise more sonorous at the first line of the next verse. Each cart contained four, with the exception of the last, in which lay the body of Valazé. His head, shaken by the concussion over the stones, swayed to and fro before his friends, who were forced to close their eyes to avoid seeing his livid features, but who still joined in the strain. On their arrival at the scaffold they all embraced, in token of community in liberty, life, and death, and then resumed their funereal chaunt. All died without weakness. Sillery, with irony, after ascending the platform, he walked round, saluting the people as though to thank them for his glory and death. The hymn became feebler at each fall of the axe, one voice still continued it, that of Vergniaud, executed the last. Like his companions, he did not die, but passed away in enthusiasm, and his life, commenced by immortal orations, ended by a hymn to the eternity of the Revolution.

One cart bore away their bodies, and one grave, by the side of that of Louis XVI., received them.

Some years afterwards, in searching the archives of the parish of La Madeleine, the bill of the gravedigger of the Commune was found, with the order of the president on the national treasury for its payment. "Twenty-two deputies of the Gironde; the coffins, 147 francs; expenses of interment, 63 francs; total, 210 francs."

Such was the price of the shovels full of earth that covered the founders of the republic. Never did Æschylus or Shakspeare invent a more bitter derision of fate than this bill of a gravedigger, demanding and receiving his pay for having alternately buried all the monarchy and all the republic of a mighty nation.

XXV. Such were the last moments of these men; they had, during their short life, all the illusions of hope; they had in death the greatest happiness which Heaven reserves for great minds, that martyrdom that rejoices in itself, and which elevates to the sanctity of a victim the man who perishes for his conscience and his country. It would be superfluous to judge them; they have been judged by their life and death. They committed three errors: the first in not having boldly proclaimed the republic before the 10th of August, at the opening of the Legislative Assembly; the second, in having conspired against the constitution of 1791, and by this means forcing the national sovereignty to act as a faction, taken part of the death of the king, and forced the Revolution to employ cruel means; the third was in the time of the Convention, having sought to govern when they should have given battle.

They had three virtues which amply atoned for their defects in the eyes of posterity. They adored liberty, they founded the republic, that precocious truth of future governments, and they died for having refused blood to the people. Their age condemned them to death, and the future has glorified and pardoned them. They died because they would not permit liberty to sully herself, and on their memory will be engraved that inscription which Vergniaud, their voice, wrote with his own hand on the wall of his dungeon — "Death rather than dishonour." "*Potius mori quam fœdari.*"

Scarcely had their heads rolled on the scaffold than a gloomy and sanguinary hue spread itself, instead of the lustre of their party, over the Convention. Youth, beauty, illusion, genius, eloquence,—all seemed to disappear with them. Paris might have said with Lacedæmon, after the loss of her youth in battle, "The country has lost its flower; liberty has lost its *prestige;* the republic has lost its spring."

Whilst the twenty-two Girondists perished thus at Paris, Pétion, Buzot, Barbaroux, and Guadet wandered, hunted like wild beasts, in the forests and caves of the Gironde. Madame Roland awaited her fate in a dungeon of the prison of the Abbaye. Dumouriez plotted in exile to escape his remorse; and La Fayette, who had been faithful to liberty at least, expiated in the subterranean cells of the fortress of

Olmutz the crime of having been its apostle, and of still professing it even in his chains.

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## BOOK XLVIII.

I. The Convention, after having punished treason in the person of Custine, royalty in the Queen, and federalism in the Gironde, wished to strike at the eventuality of a future dynasty, and surround the republic with the corpses of her past, present, and future foes. They remembered the Duc d'Orléans, so long their accomplice, and now their victim.

This prince was imprisoned, with two of his sons, in the fortress Saint Jean, at Marseilles, and suffering in the dungeons of this state prison all the tortures of captivity. Interrogated, for the first time, on the 7th May, by the president of the Revolutionary Tribunal of *des Bouches du Rhône*, on his connection with Mirabeau, La Fayette, and Dumouriez, and his plots of re-establishing and usurping the throne, the Duc d'Orléans refuted his accusers. He replied in the language of a sincere republican, who sacrifices his ambition to his opinions, his rank to his duty, his blood to his country. He recounted what he had done, and named the proofs of his patriotism. These proofs were equally striking and sinister. The publication, in a garbled form, of his examination, gave rise to a controversy in the Paris papers, which, whilst defending the prince, rendered him a greater object of attention to the Jacobins. The Girondists, his enemies, involved him in their fall. For some weeks past the severity of his detention had relaxed; he was allowed to see his sons, the Duc de Montpensier and the Duc de Beaujolais, and to take his meals with them. These young princes, almost children, innocent from their age, and guilty from their name, were confined in the same fortress as their father, but in separate apartments. The public papers and a few letters were allowed to reach the prince, and gave him new hope. On learning the death of Marat, Buzot, Barbaroux, and Pétion, his most inveterate foes, he believed that the more equitable Montagne would recall him to their party. Montagnard, alike irreproachable in his acts and his heart, he could not deem that they would immolate the earliest and the most disinterested of the republicans.

II. The 15th October, the Paris papers announced at Marseilles that the Convention had decreed the trial of the Duc d'Orléans. The prince was at table with his sons. "So much the better," said he; "this must finish one way or another. Embrace me, my children; this is a glorious day in my life. And of what," continued he, "can they accuse me?" He opened the paper, and read the accusation. "This accusation is founded on nothing," cried he; "it has been solicited by great scoundrels; but no matter, let them do their worst, I defy them to find any thing against me. Come, my children, let us look on it as good news, and continue our repast."

The next day the commissioners arrived from Paris, and flattered the prince that his approaching trial would prove his certain justification and freedom.

Security and joy filled the heart of the father and children. But on the 23d of October the prince entered his son's the Duc de Montpensier's apartment, at five o'clock in the morning, and tenderly embraced him: "I am come to bid you farewell," said he, bathing the face of his son with his tears. "I wished," continued he, "to depart without bidding you farewell, for this is always a painful moment, but I could not resist my desire to see you for a moment. Adieu, my child, console yourself and your brother, and think of the joy we shall both feel when we meet again." He then again embraced his son, and quitted the room. The two brothers passed the day in mutually strengthening each other against the anguish of a separation, which left them orphans in the power of tyrannical gaolers.

III. The prince, attended by a single valet-de-chambre, named Gamache, and accompanied by the commissioners of the Convention, took the road to Paris, escorted by a strong detachment of *gens d'armes*. He travelled slowly, and slept at the large towns. At Auxerre he stopped to dine, and one of the commissioners despatched a note to the Convention, to announce the hour of the arrival of the prince at Paris, and to ask in what prison he was to be confined. At the barrier of Paris a man got into the carriage, and ordered the postillions to drive to the Conciergerie. The prince alighted in the court of the Palais de Justice, which was thronged with spectators, curious to behold him. He was placed in a chamber adjoining that in which Marie Antoinette passed her last moments. His faithful servant was allowed to remain with him; and when the commissioners withdrew,—"Well," said the duke to Gamache, "you have followed me even in a dungeon. I thank you, Gamache; let us hope that we shall not always be in prison." He wished to write to his children, but feared his letters would be opened and read. The name of his sons and daughter were constantly on his lips. Voidel, his defender, had free access to him, and conferred with the members of the Committee of General Safety, and repeatedly assured him of his acquittal.

During the four days that preceded his trial the prince displayed the utmost illusion or indifference as to his fate, like a man to whom life is a burden and death a relief. The 6th of November the Duc d'Orléans appeared before the tribunal; the accusation was as vague and chimerical as that of the Girondists; and the peremptory and concise answers of the prisoner afforded no pretext for condemnation. Interrogated by Hermann, whether he had not voted the death of the tyrant with the ambitious premeditation of succeeding him, "No," replied he, "I obeyed my heart and conscience." He heard his sentence as he would have heard that of another, and only observed in a sarcastic tone to his judges, "Since you were determined to condemn me, you should have found more specious pretexts, for you will never persuade any one that you believed me *really* guilty of the treason of which you have declared me 'guilty.'" Then looking steadily at the *cidevant* Marquis d'Antonelle, the former confidant of his revolutionary actions, and now president of the jury that sentenced him to death, "And you, too," said he, reproachfully, "you who know me so well." Antonelle cast down his eyes. "Au reste," continued the prince; "since my fate is decided, I demand — not to be forced to languish there until to-morrow (pointing with his hand towards the Conciergerie), but to be led to instant execution."

IV. Two priests, the Abbé Lambert, and the Abbé Lothringer, the same who had visited the Girondists the night previous to their execution, awaited in the large dungeon until the condemned prisoners descended. They beheld the Duc d'Orléans enter, no longer with that external composure, which every courageous man forces himself to wear before his enemies, but in the disorder of a man indignant at the injustice of his fellow-men, and who, in the solitude of his prison, gives vent to his feelings. "The wretches!" exclaimed he; "I have given them all — rank, fortune, ambition, honour, the future reputation of my house, — and this is the recompence they reserve for me. If I had acted, as they accuse me, from ambition, how unhappy should I be at this moment; but it was from a higher ambition than that of a throne, it was the ambition of the liberty of my country, and the felicity of my fellow-creatures. 'Vive la Republique!' that cry shall be heard from my dungeon, as it was from my palace."

V. The *gens d'armes* and gaolers suffered this outbreak of indignation to expend itself without interruption. When he became somewhat calmer, the Duc d'Orléans approached the fire, and the German priest, Lothringer, addressing him abruptly: "Allons, Monseigneur," said he, "you have given a sufficient time to regret; you must now confess." "Leave me in peace, blockhead," returned the Duc d'Orléans, impatiently. "You are, then, as you have lived?" asked the priest. "Oh, yes," interrupted the *gens d'armes*, in a tone of cruel pleasantry, "he has lived so well, let him die as he has lived."

The Abbé Lambert, a man of feeling and delicacy, suffered at the coarseness of his fellow-priest, and the brutality of the soldiers, and addressing the prince with an air of respect and compassion; "Egalité," said he, "I come to offer you the assistance, or at least the commiseration of a minister of Heaven." "Who are you?" demanded the Duc d'Orléans, in a softened tone. "I am the vicar-general of the bishop of Paris," replied the abbé. "If you do not desire my ministry as a priest, can I at least as a man render you any service, or convey any message to your wife and family?" "No," replied the Duc d'Orléans, "I thank you; but I desire no other eye than my own should scrutinise my conscience, and I only need my own assistance to die as a good citizen." He then sat down to breakfast, and ate and drank with appetite. A member of the tribunal came to inquire if he had any thing to reveal that affected the republic. "Had I known any thing that threatened the safety of the country," replied he, "I should not have awaited this hour to reveal it. I bear no resentment against the tribunal, or even against the Convention and the patriots: they did not desire my death; it comes from a higher hand."

VI. At three o'clock he was summoned to the scaffold: the prisoners of the Conciergerie, almost all of them enemies to the name of the Duc d'Orléans and the share he had taken in the Revolution, crowded the passages to see him pass. Six *gens d'armes*, their sabres drawn, escorted him. His bearing, look, and firm step made him resemble rather a soldier marching to battle, than a prisoner going to execution. The Abbé Lothringer and three other condemned prisoners mounted the same cart, which was guarded by squadrons of *gens d'armes*. Every eye was fixed on the Duc d'Orléans, who seemed to become again a prince, by the feeling that he died as a citizen: he raised his head proudly, and gazed calmly on the multitude. Through some impediment in the street, or a refinement of cruelty, the cart stopped for an instant on the Place du Palais Royal. "Why do we stop here?" he asked. "That you may contemplate your palace," returned the priest. "You see the journey is well nigh at an end, think of your conscience and confess." The prince made no reply, but silently contemplated the windows of that abode where he had fomented the germs of the Revolution, practised the follies of his youth, and cultivated all his family attachments. The inscription of *national property*, inscribed on the gates of the Palais Royal, in the place of his arms, showed him that the republic had divided his spoils even before his death, and this roof would never shelter his children.

He continued silent and pensive, until they reached the Rue Royale leading to the Place de la Revolution. The sight of the crowd and the roll of the drums, announcing his approach, made him raise his head lest his sorrow should be mistaken for weakness. The priest continued to urge him to confess. "Humble yourself before God, and confess your faults." "How can I, amidst this noise and confusion? Is this the place for repentance or courage?" returned the prince. "Well then," replied the priest, "confess those faults which weigh heaviest on your conscience. Heaven will look at your intention, and the impossibility of more ample confession, and I will pardon you in Heaven's name."

Either through weariness, or a tardy inspiration, the prince inclined himself before the servant of God, and murmured a few words, inaudible to all but the priest, and received the pardon of Heaven, at a few paces from the spot where Louis XVI. had bequeathed his to his enemies. The prince was elegantly attired, with that imitation of foreign costume he had always affected. On mounting the scaffold the executioner's assistants wished to pull off his boots. "No, no," said he, calmly, "you will do it more easily afterwards."

He looked fearlessly at the knife, and died with a firmness that seemed like a revelation of the future. Was this stoicism of character the conviction of the republican, or the *arrière pensée* of a father, ambitious for his son, and who foresees that a fickle nation will give him a throne in exchange for a few drops of blood?

VII. The memory of this prince is a problem, which gives the historian cause to fear lest he should be wanting in justice or reprobation, according as he judges him; and the period at which we write is not favourable to this judgment. His son reigns over France, and indulgence for the memory of his father might seem like a flattery of success; severity, like the resentment of a theory; and thus the apprehension of appearing servile or hostile, will equally threaten the historian; but to remain equitable, he must brave alike the suspicion of hostility and adulation, for the memory of the dead is not to be made a matter of traffic in the hands of the living. As a republican, this prince has, in our opinion, been calumniated. All parties had agreed in making his name an object of insult and execration; the royalists, because he was one of the principal instigators of the Revolution; the republicans, because his death was one of the most odious acts of ingratitude of the Revolution; the people, because he was a prince; the aristocrats, because he had made himself one of the people; the factions, because he refused to lend his name to their plots against the country; all, because he wished to imitate that doubtful glory of Brutus, which is termed heroism. In the eyes of all impartial men, if he voted the death of the king from conviction and republicanism, that conviction is repugnant to feeling, and resembles an outrage on nature. But hate had sufficiently cruel truths to heap on his name, to spare him calumny and rumour. In proportion as the Revolution frees itself from its obscurity, and each party on its death-bed bequeaths its confidences to history, the memory of the Duc d'Orléans is purged from the plots, the treasons, the crimes, and the importance ascribed to it. The Revolution neither owes him so much gratitude, nor so much hate. He was but an instrument, alternately used and broken, and was neither the author nor the master, the Judas nor the Cromwell. The Revolution was not a conspiracy, but a philosophy ; it did not sell itself to one man, but devoted itself to an idea. To see it solely in the Duc d'Orléans is to ennoble too much the man, and lower too much the event. With the exception of the first popular agitations in Paris, we do not clearly perceive his name, his influence, or his gold in any of the decisive days. He perhaps for a moment dreamed of a crown voted to him by popular acclamation, and enjoyed with culpable satisfaction the abasement and alarm of a queen and court who had humiliated him. But he soon saw that the Revolution would crown no one, and that it would involve in the ruin of the throne all pretenders to it, and all the surviving members of royalty. He then repented ; the misfortunes of Louis XVI. touched him, and he sincerely wished to reconcile himself with the king and the constitution, but the insults of the courtiers and the antipathy of the court repulsed him. He sought an asylum in extreme opinion, and only found the mistrust and hate of the popular chiefs, who could not pardon him his name. Danton abandoned him ; Robespierre affected to fear him ; Marat denounced him. Camille Desmoulins pointed him out to the Terrorists ; the Girondists accused, and the Montagnards sent him to the scaffold.

VIII. If any man followed blindly, but with unswerving fidelity, the progress of the Revolution without inquiring whither it led him, it was the Duc d'Orléans. He was the Œdipus of the family of the Bourbons. Weak as a man,—culpable as a relation,—irreproachable as a patriot,—the suicide of his own reputation, he realised the speech of

Danton, "Perish our memory, and let the republic be saved." A coward, if he made this sacrifice to his popularity; cruel, if he made it to his ambition. He bore with him the secret of his political conduct to the tribunal of God, and in this ignorance of his motives history herself may doubt.

# BOOK XLIX.

I. During these events the republic was alike occupied with its scaffolds and its battles; and in proportion as it became more terrible at home, it became more formidable abroad, and the attack on its northern frontiers inspired more patriotism than terror. All the measures for a levy *en masse* were executed with order and promptitude. Carnot, who was well surnamed the *Louvois* of the Terror, held his head-quarters at the Committee of General Safety,—Carnot had been, since the death of Custine, the real generalissimo of the armies of the republic. These armies, scattered, or imprisoned in their camps, or intrenched behind lines, devoid of confidence in their leaders, without any other system of tactics than a passive resistance, began to reassume the solidity and discipline that ensures victory. The genius of the Revolution, the very necessities of the country, inspired Carnot and his colleagues, taught them the art of modern (or rather popular) warfare, which consisted in leading an armed people to the frontiers,—in attacking the centre of the enemy,—in neglecting slight checks and the loss of a few towns to attain great results,—and in leading the armies to victory rather by enthusiasm than discipline.

II. Never was the futility of coalitions more conspicuous than in the campaigns following that of 1792. We have seen how slowly Austria, Prussia, and the empire had formed their armed contingents in 1791, and with what hesitation—nearer akin to treason, than prudence—the Duke of Brunswick had invaded the French territory, and attacked the army of Dumouriez. Instead of surprising France whilst divided and disarmed,—of marching in columns of one or two hundred thousand men on Paris, by one of those numerous openings which nature has left in our frontiers, in the valleys of the Rhine, or by the plains of the north,—the Duke of Brunswick, and after him the Prince de Cobourg, had wasted eighteen months in councils of war, in empty armaments, and timid manœuvres, always opposing to our battalions forces inferior, or at most, of equal strength, and only advancing to retreat, as though the soil of France would consume their soldiers.

The rivalry that existed in the cabinets contributed no less than the inefficiency of the generals, to afford France time for preparation. No real concert existed between them, and they contented themselves with preserving the decorum of war; with defending their own territories; threatening here and there some of our fortresses, and combating in isolated bodies; suffering Dumouriez to hasten with his best troops from the deliverance of Champagne to the conquest of Belgium; beholding the fall of the throne, the trial of the king, the birth of the republic, the immolation of the queen, and the outbreaks at Paris that convulsed their very thrones, without any attempt to rally against the common danger. Whence arose this difference between the coalition and France? Because France was aroused by enthusiasm, and egotism fettered the limbs of the coalition. France arose, fought, and fell for that liberty, whose sanctity she felt, and of whom she wished to be the apostle and martyr.

III. Poland, weakened by its last dissensions, was fast approaching the period of its dismemberment. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, more attentive to Poland than France, constantly watched each other, lest any one of the three powers should seize on the prey whilst the others were engaged with France. Russia, under pretext of observing the Turks, and stifling the revolution in Southern Poland, sent no troops to join the coalition, but contented herself with despatching a fleet to the Baltic, to prevent neutral vessels from bringing provisions or iron into the French ports.

The Baron de Thugut, son of a boatman of Lentz, had attracted the notice of Maria Theresa by his precocity; and after having been for many years employed in secret negotiations at Constantinople, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg, had resided at Paris during the storms of the Revolution. He had investigated its principles, and was acquainted with the actors in it, and had the reputation of having imbibed in this hot-bed the contagion of philosophy and freedom. Thugut, connected, like the Duke of Brunswick, with the secret societies, did not desire to extinguish, but only to moderate, the fire of the French Revolution. Acting in concordance with Joseph II., that philosophic emperor, he had passed from his service into that of Francis II., an anti-revolutionary prince. Thugut, to flatter the new emperor, had counselled the war with France, but had caused the chief command to be vested in the Prince de Cobourg, who was entirely under his secret influence, and thus he controlled the war whilst he declared it.

Since the victory of Nerwinde, the cabinet of Vienna and the Prince de Cobourg had been too much occupied in strengthening the Austrian power in Belgium, to follow up their success against France. Dampierre had succeeded Dumouriez. Having received orders from the Convention to attack the Austrian army, posted between Maubeuge and Saint Amand, Dampierre obeyed, though hopeless of success, and marched on an enemy protected by woods, barricades, and trenches. Five times did the attacking columns recoil before the troops of Clairfayt, the most energetic of Cobourg's generals. At the sixth attack, Dampierre, at the head of a picked detachment, charged a redoubt. "Where are you going, father," exclaimed his son, who acted as his aide-de-camp; "you are exposing yourself to certain death." "I know it, my child," replied his father; "but I prefer to fall on the field of honour than beneath the axe of the guillotine." Hardly had he uttered these words, than a cannon-ball carried away his thigh, and left him dead on the ground.

The Prince de Cobourg, stimulated in vain by Clairfayt and the duke of York, who commanded the Anglo-Hanoverian army, did not pursue the French army, but suffered it to again take up the strong position of the camp of Cæsar. In twelve days the troops of the coalition might have encamped on the heights of Montmartre. But the cabinet of Berlin, occupied in humbling the Austrian influence in Germany, in sapping the empire, and appropriating Poland to itself, pursued the same vacillating policy which had timidly led its armies in Champagne, and as shamefully withdrawn them, in the preceding year. The Duke of Brunswick, still at the head of the Prussian forces, contented himself with retaking Mayence; and his army, imposing, numerous, but almost stationary, resembled an army of observation rather than one in actual campaign.

The king of Prussia, his eyes fixed on Poland, was in his camp. Lord Beauchamp came from London, to blame the indecision of this prince, and to obtain his signature to a treaty with England, by which the two powers secured their frontiers from France.

Suddenly the king of Prussia left his camp for Poland, and England alone persisted in maintaining the conquest with France. She had two motives for this — the rival of France on the seas, in the colonies, and the East Indies; disputing with the French vessels the navigation and the commerce of the sea, the destruction of the French fleet, and occupation of our ports in the Mediterranean, formed a natural object of ambition, and promised too rich a spoil to be overlooked. On the other hand, although liberal theories had established themselves between the reflecting portion of the two nations; yet, as English liberty is entirely aristocratic, and French liberty declared itself daily more and more democratic, the British aristocracy was indignant and alarmed at the example of a victorious democracy who sought to root out aristocracy as it had done royalty.

Mr. Pitt, who was the personification of the genius of aristocracy of his country, was all powerful because he had been the first to perceive these perils. In vain did the more clamorous, but less solid opposition, composed of Mr. Fox and his party, persist in blaming war and contesting the subsidies. Popular opinion abandoned these partisans of the French Revolution, since this revolution destroyed kings and queens, and proscribed its noblest citizens. Robespierre ruined the popularity of Fox, and the war against France was no longer a war of ambition or policy, but became social. Mr. Pitt obtained all he asked, because he was believed to be desirous of saving every thing.

Mr. Pitt had for allies, Spain, severed from the family bond by the dethronement of the Bourbons in France; Russia and Holland, who ensured him Sweden and Denmark;

Prussia, engaged by the treaty of the 14th of July; Austria, the empire; the greater number of the independent German princes; Naples, Venice, and, lastly, Turkey, who had refused, at his solicitation, to receive the French ambassador, Sémonville. The Swiss cantons themselves, particularly Berne, excited by his agents, and indignant at the murder of their unfortunate children on the 10th of August, seized the French envoys, Maret and Sémonville, and surrendered them to the Austrians. Thus, in spite of the internal dissensions of the coalition, England still maintained it rather in battle array than as a camp on the banks of the Rhine, and remunerated the efforts against us she extorted from them. The duke of York, the king's son, a brave and skilful soldier, commanded, at the extremity of the prince of Cobourg's line, the Anglo-Hanoverian army, reinforced by some Austrian and Hessian troops. The only army capable of defending the Convention was encamped before Arras; and the passage of the Somme could alone oppose the two hundred thousand men the prince of Cobourg could march on Paris. Envoys from Vienna and Berlin deliberated with Mr. Pitt at London on the plan of the campaign; but instead of concentrating their forces, and marching on the Somme, they resolved on a plan more in conformity with the dissension and uncertainty that prevailed in the cabinets. The siege of Dunkirk was resolved upon, and Admiral Maxbridge had orders to prepare to bombard the place with his squadron, whilst the duke of York attacked by land. The Anglo-Hanoverian army advanced to Furnes, and divided itself into two bodies, one of which, under the orders of the duke of York, attacked Dunkirk, whilst the other, under Marshal Freytag, occupied the little town of Hondschoote, and covered the besieging army. These two bodies of troops were at least 36,000 strong, and were joined to the forces of the Prince de Cobourg by the *corps d'armée* of the Prince of Orange, consisting of 16,000 men.

VI. General Houchard, commander-in-chief of the French army of the north, received orders from Carnot to raise the siege of Dunkirk at any sacrifice. This city, although incapable of holding out any length of time, performed prodigies of valour to avoid the humiliation of surrendering to the English. Jourdan, chef-de-battalion a few days before, and now created general by Carnot, commanded a corps of 10,000 men, encamped on the heights of Cassel, five leagues from Dunkirk. Informed of the intended attack on the town, he hastened thither, superintended the preparations for defence, and then returned to Cassel, leaving General Souham to command Dunkirk.

An officer, whose name was destined at a future day to become illustrious, Lazare Hoche, who had already attracted the notice of Carnot by his ardour and intelligence, aided General Souham in the defence of the town.

Carnot detached fifteen thousand of the best troops of the army of the Rhine, and sent them to Houchard's force, to drill and support the raw recruits, of whom his troops were almost entirely composed.

Houchard advanced at the head of 40,000 men against the English line. On his passage through Cassel, he united the corps of Jourdan with his own, and marched on Hondschoote, where the duke of York and Marshal Freytag had fortified themselves. Their left wing rested on Bergues, their right on Furnes; their centre was protected by walls, hedges, and the redoubts they had thrown up at Hondschoote; and at their back was the immense marsh of Moëre, which extends from Hondschoote to the sea, whilst paved roads, which could be easily rendered impassable, assured their retreat and communication with the force before Dunkirk.

The duke of York, Freytag, and Walmoden felt the most perfect security in the strength of their position and the number of their troops. They constantly blamed Admiral Maxbridge for his delay in executing the orders of Mr. Pitt, and bringing his fleet before Dunkirk, to co-operate with them. The English fleet, however, did not appear, whilst the French gun-boats, in the great harbour, poured perpetual volleys of shells and bombs into the English camp.

VII. On the 6th of August the outposts of the two armies met at Rexpoëde, a large village between Cassel and Hondschoote. Jourdan, dispersing every thing before him, had advanced as far as this village, and halted there for the night. Three battalions occupied the village: the main body of Jourdan's army encamped more in the rear, and the cavalry occupied the fields and gardens. At nightfall General Freytag and Prince Adolphus, one of the king's sons, who were a little in advance of their troops, came suddenly on these bivouacs, and were made prisoners by the French. Walmoden occupied Wormouth, but, informed of the presence of the French at Rexpoëde, he attacked them at midnight, drove in the advanced guard, rescued Freytag and Prince Adolphus, and narrowly missed capturing General Houchard and the representatives of the people, Delbrel and Levasseur. Jourdan, who hastened at the sound of the firing, could only succeed in saving his general and the representatives. The three battalions in the village broke, and were rallied by General Collaud, who was bivouacing at Oost Capelle. Jourdan, after vainly attempting to carry the village, returned to join Houchard and the representatives at Rembek; and, as he entered the town, his horse fell dead under him. Walmoden, after this affair, retreated with his division on Hondschoote.

On the 7th Houchard assembled his forces, and reconnoitred the advanced posts. An excess of prudence led him to weaken his army, by detaching one of his divisions to observe the English at Dunkirk, and on the 8th he attacked.

Freytag, who had been wounded at Rexpoëde, was unable to mount his horse, and the command devolved on Walmoden, who drew out his army in the fields before Hondschoote. On the French side Collaud commanded the right, Jourdan the left, Houchard the centre, and Vandamme the advanced guard. A redoubt, with eleven pieces of cannon, commanded the town and swept the roads of Bergues and Blenheim, whilst another redoubt was thrown upon the route de Warem, and every approach flooded. To carry these redoubts it was necessary to march for ten minutes up to the waist in water, and exposed to the fire of the artillery and sharpshooters, securely posted behind the walls and hedges. Houchard, who carefully avoided exposing his troops, lost time in a series of formal attacks, which, whilst they compromised nothing, ruined every thing.

The representative of the people, Levasseur, a brave patriot, although unskilled in military affairs, unceasingly demanded explanations of all his orders from the general, threatening to deprive him of the command, if he did not obey him. On horseback, at the head of the troops, and conspicuous by his tri-coloured scarf and floating plume, Levasseur made the soldiers blush and the generals tremble. He pointed with one hand to Hondschoote, with the other to the guillotine. The Convention commanded victory, the country wished to save Dunkirk.

At the moment when he was addressing a column that was exposed to the fire of the artillery in the hollow way at Kellern, a cannon-ball broke his horse's back. Levasseur mounted another, and observing that the battalion had halted, "Forward!" cried he, "I shall be at the redoubt before you."

He met Jourdan, who had been wounded, and who, like himself, was indignant at the indecision of the commander-in-chief. "What will become of us with such a leader?" exclaimed Jourdan; "there are twice as many men to defend Hondschoote as we have to attack it." "Jourdan," said Levasseur, "you are soldier, tell me what should be done, and it shall be." "One thing," replied Jourdan, "and we may yet conquer: cease the firing, which decimates us, without weakening the enemy, and let the whole line charge with the bayonet."

VIII. Levasseur and Delbrel eagerly adopted the suggestion, and Jourdan himself led on the attacking columns. More than four thousand men fell, dead or wounded, around the redoubts, and the redoubts themselves, stormed at length, ceased their fire only when the last artilleryman was bayoneted at his gun.

The English fell back in good order, defending the town, the church, and the Hotel-de-Ville. The old château of Hondschoote was set on fire by the shells, and buried beneath its ruins the body of General Cochenhausen.

Walmoden, attacked and forced on every side except Belgium, withdrew his shattered forces to Furnes, whilst the duke of York, who had been present at Hondschoote, gallopped to Dunkirk, to raise the siege. Houchard, in spite of the observations of Jourdan and the representatives, who entreated him to follow up his victory, by pursuing the Hanoverians on the road to Furnes, remained inactive for two days. This simple manœuvre would have placed the army of the duke of York between the ramparts of Dunkirk and the army of Houchard. Not an Englishman would have escaped, for Hoche was in Dunkirk, and in two hours these sandhills would have been the Caudine forks of England. Houchard, however, did not or would not see this, and suffered the duke of York to march quietly along a slip of sand which connects Dunkirk with Furnes, and join Walmoden and the Prince of Orange in Belgium.

IX. The news of the battle of Hondschoote filled Paris with joy, but the Convention reproached the victorious general with his victory as a treason; and the commissioners of the army of the north, Hentz, Peyssard, and Duquesnoy, sent Houchard to the Revolutionary Tribunal. "Houchard is guilty," said they to the Convention, "of having gained only a half victory; the army is republican, and will see with satisfaction that a traitor is surrendered to justice, and that the representatives of the people watch over the conduct of their generals." The unfortunate Houchard was condemned to death, and met his fate with the intrepidity of a soldier and the calmness of innocence. His death taught the other generals that victory would not always save them from the scaffold; and that there was no safety but complete obedience to the orders of the representatives of the people.

The military operations on our other frontiers, until January 1794, were confined to the occupation of Savoy, by Kellerman, and Nice, by Biron, an unfortunate campaign in the Pyrenees, against General Ricardos, but in which the aged French general, Dagobert, in his seventy-fifth year, covered himself with glory. The nomination of Jourdan, to replace Houchard, at the army of the north, and his manœuvres to cover Maubeuge, threatened by the coalition, to whom the capture of Maubeuge would open the approaches to Paris.

Maubeuge, defended by a strong garrison and an intrenched camp of 25,000 men, was decimated by famine and disease. A hundred and twenty thousand men besieged it. General Ferrand commanded the camp, General Chancel the town. The patriotism of the soldiers and inhabitants could only have maintained the defence of this gate of France a few hours longer, when Jourdan and Carnot announced their approach by the sound of their cannon. Eighty thousand men, under the Prince de Cobourg, intrenched in a position of which Wattignies was the centre, awaited the French, who attacked them in five columns, at ten o'clock in the morning, on the 15th of November. The French were repulsed at several points; and Carnot accused Jourdan of cowardice, who, stung to madness, rushed at the head of one of the divisions, to the attack of an almost inaccessible platform, commanded by the batteries of Clairfayt; his whole column was mowed down by their fire, and he was well nigh the only survivor. Carnot, after acknowledging his injustice, left him at liberty to follow his own plan. Jourdan formed 25,000 men into a compact body, which enclosed in its centre the flying artillery, opening to admit of its playing, closing to cover the guns, and thus carrying a moving citadel with it to the summit of the platform. This formidable column swept all before it, and the imperial cavalry in vain endeavoured to break the other columns. One alone, that of General Gratien, was thrown into disorder, but the representative, Duquesnoy, deprived Gratien of his command, rallied the soldiers, and returned to the combat. Wattignies was carried; and the cannon of Maubeuge replied with joyful salvos to the thunder of the guns of Carnot and Jourdan. The battle of Wattignies would have been more decisive, if the 25,000 men of the camp of Maubeuge, under Ferrand, had prevented the Prince de Cobourg and Clairfayt from repassing the Sombre. The soldiers in the camp, and Chancel, who commanded the town, desired it, but want of orders and excessive prudence prevented Ferrand from consenting. A victim was necessary to the Convention, and Chancel mounted the scaffold.

X. At the army of the Rhine, the zealous representatives of the people had replaced Custine by Beauharnais, Beauharnais by Landremont, Landremont by Carlen, who but a month before was only a captain, and Carlen by Pichegru. This army, consisting of 45,000 men, defended the entrance of Alsace by the fortified lines of Wissembourg. Wurmser, the oldest but the most daring of all the generals of the empire, surprised these lines owing to the incapacity of Carlen. This general, threatened on the other side by the Duke of Brunswick, retired to the heights of Saverne and Strasbourg, and Wurmser, who was born in Alsace, entered in triumph Haguenau, his country. A secret treaty for the surrender of Strasbourg was negotiated between Wurmser, and certain principal families, and the only stipulation was, the Austrian general should occupy it in the name of Louis XVII. This plot, which was discovered in time, brought to the scaffold seventeen of the principal inhabitants of Strasbourg; some convicted and others accused of royalism. The fort Vauban was stormed by the Austrians, and Landau could not hold out much longer. Saint Just and Lebas were sent to Alsace, to intimidate treason or cowardice by death. Pichegru and Hoche also arrived, the one to assume the command of the army of the Rhine, the other (though only five-and-twenty), that of the army of the Moselle. "We shall be commanded as Frenchmen should be," said the letters from the army, after the troops had been reviewed by the two generals: "Pichegru possesses the gravity of genius; Hoche is youthful as the revolution, robust as the people, and his glance is proud and aspiring as that of the eagle." These two new leaders fully justified the enthusiasm of the army. Pichegru, who had been at first mathematical teacher to the monks of Arbois, his native town, afterwards served as a common soldier during the American war, returned to his country at the commencement of the revolution, and presided at the club of Besançon. A battalion of volunteers, destitute of a leader, passing through the town in 1791, took him for their commander, and in two years his energy, talents, and influence over men's minds, had raised him to the rank of general of division, and procured him the protection of Robespierre and Collot d'Herbois. Hoche—young, handsome, and martial, a hero of antiquity by his look, figure, and courage, a modern hero by the study, the reading, the meditation that gave moral strength, of an humble family, yet born to a great destiny—had enlisted into the French guards, and did his comrades' duty for half their pay, which he employed in the purchase of treatises on warfare and history. Sent to Paris, as aide-de-camp to General Leveneur, after the flight of Dumouriez, he was summoned before the Committee of Public Safety, to inform them of the precise state of the army, and astonished the members of it by the clearness of his answers, the greatness of his conceptions, and the martial eloquence of his language. This interview, in which the statesmen discerned the warrior, procured him the rank of Adjutant-general; and the defence of Dunkirk won him the notice of

Carnot, and the rank of general of brigade; and his skilful manœuvres before Furnes and Ypres, to repair the faults of Houchard, caused him to be at once appointed to command the army of the Moselle. Hoche had but one defect, — the feeling of his own superiority degenerated occasionally into contempt for his colleagues. In a revolution, where every thing was accessible to ambition and genius, it is impossible to say what Hoche might have attained had not death checked his career.

In la Vendée the different generals sent by the Committee of Public Safety wasted their troops in a civil war, which sprang up beneath their feet; they gained solitary battles, and lost the campaign.

Two other insurrections also broke out at Lyons and Marseilles, in the very heart of the republic, and attracted the attention, the force, and the desperate energy of the Convention.

XI. Lyons is situated, like all large manufacturing cities, at that precise spot where the soil, fuel, fire, water, and the dense population furnish the necessary elements and hands for vast factories and undertakings. The military position of Lyons is in conformity with its commercial situation. A height, almost insulated, and called La Dombe, extends from Trévoux on one side, and Meximieux on the other, between the two great rivers, the Rhône and the Saône. This fertile tongue of land runs narrowing gradually to a lofty platform, called La Croix Rousse, the faubourg of Lyons. There the platform, worn almost to a point by the two rivers, suddenly descends in a rapid declivity, and then stretches in a long low plain to the confluence of the waters, and this narrow and extensive plain forms the body of the city.

The Rhône, an immense torrent, rolls on the left its waves, which flow through the valleys of Vienne, Valence, and Avignon into the Mediterranean, whilst on the right runs the Saône, a river equally large, but less impetuous than the Rhône, which descends from the mountains, and through the vallies of Burgundy, penetrates the city of Lyons by a narrow gorge, passes beneath the hills of Fourvières and Sainte Foi, and joins the Rhône at the marshy point of Perrache. The city, too much confined by the two rivers, has, as it were, overflowed the almost insulated tongue of land that borders the Saône. Its cathedral, its public buildings, and its most thickly populated quarters, are crowded between the mountain and the river; streets rise so perpendicularly against the sides of the acclivity that they seem more like ladders, and the houses appear to hang to the hills.

XII. On the opposite side the city displays to the south the long and splendid *façade* of the quays Saint Clair, and the river here runs almost on a level with the low grounds of Brotteaux. The vast plains of Dauphiné, often overflowed by the Rhône, stretch away as far as the eye can reach, until bounded on the left by the dark hills of Bugey, and in front and on the left by the Alps, Switzerland, Savoy, and Italy.

Between the keys of the Rhône and those of the Saône extends the city, with its places, its streets, its public buildings, its Hôtel-de-Ville, its markets, its hospitals, and its theatres. On every side are visible traces of population, manufactories, activity, wealth, and labour.

XIII. Lyons forms two distinct cities, and contains two different races of people; the commercial part of the city extends from the heights of Croix Rousser to the Place de Bellecour and the Place de Terreaux. That portion inhabited by the nobles, the capitalists, and the wealthy merchants, lies in the Place de Bellecour, and the opulent quartiers of Perrache. On the one hand is toil and poverty, on the other ease and wealth.

The city is essentially plebeian: the tradesmen, rich and numerous, recall those *silk* and *wool* workers of the commercial republic of Florence of whom Machiavel speaks, and who, glorying in their industry, and adopting as their banner their implements as weavers and carders, formed factions in the states, and castes in the democracy. Such was, such is still, Lyons. To this class must be added a population of two hundred thousand workmen, resident in the city, the faubourgs, and the adjacent villages and hamlets, and employed in the different branches of commerce, and particularly in the preparation of silk.

XIV. It is evident that such a people would be rather republican than monarchical, for their social constitution is but a republic of interest, and a democracy of manners. Ignorant of courtly usages, filled with contempt for the nobility, the fall of the great dignitaries of the state rather flattered than humbled their plebeian pride. The States-general, the resurrection of the National Assembly, the humiliation, the equality of the orders of the state, the destruction of privileges, the fall of the Bastille, the doctrines of the Constituent Assembly, the reform introduced by Mirabeau, the popularity enjoyed by La Fayette and the Lameths, the creation of the national guard, and the constitution of 1791, — all the spoils by aristocracy and royal prerogative torn from the throne of the Girondists; and the 10th of August, when it was deemed so easy to fill up the place of the throne by a regular republican constitution, had given the greatest satisfaction to the inhabitants of Lyons.

The revolution of Paris had been applauded, but moderated, by the feeling of the country.

XV. The first agitations of Lyons had been fomented by Roland and his wife, who then resided in the vicinity, and they had by their writings, their journals, and their clubs which had the dormant fire of the Jacobins; but this flame, awakened so rapidly spread through the rest of France, was with difficulty lighted at Lyons.

XVI. The result was, that Jacobinism, finding neither advocates nor partisans amongst the *bourgeoisie*, had been forced to seek them amongst the dregs of the populace — men of profligate life, who had nothing to lose, and every thing to gain. Like Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Toulon, Lyons had enthusiastically adopted the doctrines of the Gironde, and the majority shuddered at the name of Robespierre, Danton, and the Montagne. The rich beheld in this party, in the Convention, the spoliators of their fortune, the people the destroyers of their religion. Commerce decreased, luxury was proscribed, and nothing was fabricated but arms. From the day on which the republic assailed its banks, its markets, its factories, and its priests, Lyons no longer recognised the republic. The city began to mingle its complaints with those of the royalists, who flocked from all the adjacent provinces to take shelter within its walls. This change of popular feeling irritated still more the threatening but overawed Jacobins of Lyons.

XVII. There was at this time in the city a man of the most dangerous class during popular convulsions, — a fanatic of the impossible. His name was Châlier, and, like Marat, he had been attracted from a distant land by the blaze of the Revolution. He was born in Piedmont, or Savoy, of an obscure family, but who possessed sufficient wealth to bestow on him a good education and a profession. Designed for the church — that ladder whose foot touches the lowest orders, and whose top reaches the highest—Châlier had been brought up by the monks at Lyons; and it seemed as though the fate of Lyons, already so like that of Florence, was to become still more analogous by possessing an agitator between Savonarola and Marat. The sound of the Revolution, which penetrated even the cloister, reached the youthful priest amidst his studies, and from that moment he was constantly composing sentences which imitated the brevity and the inspiration of Holy Writ. "Heads have fallen, souls are turned to ice, the whole human race is dead. Creating genius, cause a new light and life to spring from this chaos. I love mighty projects, audacious deeds, the shocks and the conflicts of revolutions. The great Being has created noble works, but he is too inactive."

The destiny of Châlier was manifested in these early outbreaks of his imagination. Under the influence of these feelings he quitted the church, entered a counting-house, and travelled for some time for his employer. He was driven out of Italy for propagating revolutionary doctrines, and thus attracted the notice of Robespierre, Marat, Camille, Desmoulins, and Fauchet, and he came to Lyons, to found under their auspices, a club, whose ardour he kindled and incited by his wild and mystic discourses.

XVIII. The mystery which enshrouded him, his poverty, his incorruptibility, his devotion to the popular cause, and his constant attendance at the public sittings of the central club, gave him great ascendency over the Jacobins of Lyons, and he had been elected president of the civil tribunal.

The morning after the massacres of September, a small band of assassins had murdered at the fortress of Pierre Encise eleven officers of the royal Pologne regiment, who had been imprisoned the previous evening on suspicion of royalism. In vain did a young girl, whose courage equalled her beauty, Mademoiselle de Bellecice, daughter of the governor of the fort, throw herself between the people and their victims, and even receive herself the sabre and pike-thrusts aimed at them—in vain did Vitet, a bold and conscientious magistrate, hasten with a few grenadiers to the spot, and endeavoured, partly by persuasion, partly by force, to save the prisoners; the entrance to all the prisons of Lyons were heaped with dead bodies, and these corpses were suspended on the next day to the trees in the public walk of Bellecour, and linked together by chains of human limbs, to strike terror into the aristocrats. At the same time the emissaries from the Cordeliers' club at Paris, amongst whom was Huguenin, who had distinguished himself on the 20th of June, came and added fuel to the fire, whilst the populace plundered the shops, and legalised the act by appointing commissioners to divide the spoil.

The municipality, whose wavering resolutions gave the victory alternately to the partisans of order or disorder, became more and more the sport of the central club. Châlier, Laussel, Roulot, a member of the municipality, and Cusset, a deputy of the Convention, publicly professed the doctrines of the agrarian law, and of plunder.

"The time is come," said they, "when the prophecy shall be fulfilled—"the wealthy shall be despoiled, and the poor shall be enriched."

"If the people want bread," cried Tarpan, "let them profit by the right of their misery to seize on the possessions of the wealthy."

"Do you seek," wrote Cusset, "a word which furnishes all you need at Lyons?—'*Die or cause others to die.*'"

XIX. To add to this excitement that of terror, these men sent for a guillotine from Paris, and permanently erected it in the Place de Bellecour; whilst, to moderate this frenzy, the Girondists despatched their friend and colleague, Vitet, to Lyons. He harangued the clubs with the manly severity of a citizen who seeks to convince rather than control by force, but the members of the club loaded him with insult and abuse. "The great day of vengeance has at length arrived," exclaimed Châlier; "five hundred men amongst us deserve to share the fate of the tyrant—I will give you the list, be it your part to strike." He proposed the establishment of a revolutionary tribunal; then seizing a crucifix, he dashed it to the earth, and trampled on it. Then conducting the assembly to the Place des Terreaux, he made them swear on the tree of liberty to destroy the aristocrats, the Rolandists, the *modérés*, the speculators, the monopolists, and the priests.

The municipality, awed for a time by the central club, issued orders, at its request, for domiciliary visits, and intrusted to the agents of the club the duty of watching and arresting suspected persons. One man alone, the mayor Nivière, who had succeeded Vitet, checked with the firmness of the antique magistrate the audacity of the factious, and infused a ray of hope into the minds of the peaceful and well-disposed inhabitants. Nivière knew that Châlier and Laussel had assembled their agents during the night, appointed a secret revolutionary tribunal, prepared the guillotine, chosen as the place of execution a bridge over the Rhône, whence the bodies could be thrown into the river; made out lists of the proscribed; and that, in the absence of a sufficient number of executioners, Laussel had said, "Every man must be an executioner: the guillotine falls of itself."

Some of those present at this hideous assembly, indignant at such wholesale butchery, having given information to the mayor, Nivière stationed several battalions, and eight pieces of artillery, round the Hôtel-de-Ville. "We must retreat, we have lost the day," exclaimed Châlier, at the sight of the bayonets and artillery. Nivière, after this victory, laid down his office, but was immediately re-elected by eight out of nine thousand votes.

XX. The adherents of Châlier, threatened, in their turn, by the *modérés*, were saved from popular fury by the very Nivière whom they had purposed to destroy. The central club was broken up, and its members demanded assistance from their brethren in Paris. The Convention ordered two Marseillais battalions should be sent to Lyons to restore public tranquillity; and also despatched three commissioners chosen from the Montagnards, Bazire, Rovère, and Legendre. But these detachments from Aix and Marseilles, deeply imbued with the Girondist feeling, were welcomed as liberators by the populace, and struck terror into the partisans of Châlier. The Jacobins, deprived of their power, resolved to attempt a second 10th of August against the municipality; they met at a patriotic banquet on the 9th of May, on the Place de Bellecour, and, encouraged by their numbers, and the applause of the populace, went in a body to demand that the revolutionary tribunal should be nominated by the municipality, but they met with a firm refusal.

Fresh commissaries, more devoted to the cause of the revolution—Albite, Dubois-Crancé, Gautier, and Nioche—were sent by the Convention; and they began by exacting a compulsory loan of six millions of francs; organised a committee of public safety, and a revolutionary army; and then quitted the city for the army of the Alps, leaving Lyons at the mercy of the revolutionary tribunal, who hastened to mulct the citizens, arm its partisans, and mark its enemies for prompt destruction. Châlier published this list under the title of "*La Boussole des Patriotes*" (the Patriots' Compass). "To arms, to arms!" cried he, hastening through the streets, at the head of the Jacobins: "Your foes have sworn to destroy even the babe at the breast, hasten then to conquer or perish beneath the ruins of this city."

These ferocious cries, extorted from the Convention a decree, authorising the citizens of Lyons to repel force by force. "Do you think," said Châlier, on hearing this decree, "do you think this decree intimidates me? No! sufficient men will join me, to poignard twenty thousand citizens, and I reserve for myself the task of plunging the knife in your throat." He then hastened to arm his followers, and prepared to attack the Hôtel-de-Ville. Gautier and Nioche entered Lyons at the head of two infantry battalions, and as many squadrons of cavalry, preceded by the band of Châlier, who insulted and attacked the armed citizens. Châlier harangued the club:—"Let us seize," cried he, "the members of the department, the presidents, the secretaries of the sections; let all their heads roll on the guillotine at one stroke, and let us bathe our hands in their blood."

XXI. While the sections were arranging, the Jacobin municipality seized on the Arsenal, which they fortified, filling the Hôtel-de-Ville with cannon, ammunition, and troops. The sectionaries assembled to the number of more than 20,000 on the Place de Bellecour, and chose, as commandant, a woollendraper, named Madinier, a man of determined courage and unshrinking arm. He carried the Arsenal, and advanced on the Hôtel-de-Ville. Nioche, the representative, sought to interpose, but in vain. Whilst the negotiation at the Arsenal was going on, the municipality was surrounded by troops of the line, and multitudes of the townspeople in the Place des Terreaux. The carcases of the first sectionaries, who had been assassinated in the streets, were strewn on the steps of the Hôtel-de-Ville, mangled and mutilated by the people.

Madinier, informed of these excesses, retained Nioche as a hostage ; and advanced the sections in two columns, one by the quays of the Saône, and the other by the quays of the Rhône. The head of this latter column was cut down by a battery placed at the extremity of the bridge Morand, which swept the entire quay. Hundreds of the sectionaries were cut down, and amongst them several royalist officers, and many of the sons of the principal families of nobility and the commerce of Lyons.

The column on the quay of the Sâone was also checked; and retreating on the Place du Carmes, was slightly sheltered by some buildings. From this vantage ground they fired on the Hôtel-de-Ville, and the Jacobins, decimated, sought for refuge in the court-yards. The representative, Gautier, presenting himself to the sectionaries to parley, was taken also as a hostage. He signed, under the fear of the sections, the suspension of the municipality. Madinier made a triumphal entry on horseback, and seizing on Châlier and his principal confederates, sent them to prison, amidst the execrations of the indignant populace, who would have torn them to pieces. This triumph for the Gironde occurred on the 29th of May, the day before the Girondists, conquerors at Lyons, were vanquished in Paris. Châlier was condemned to death some days after by the Criminal Tribunal, and the guillotine, which he had sent for from Paris to destroy his enemies, was first destined to sever his own head from his body. The crucifix he had, in turns, adored and broken, no longer left his hands for a moment in his dungeon. Condemned to die at four o'clock in the morning, he employed the remainder of the day in writing his will. He made his adieux to the other prisoners, and walking to the scaffold with a firm tread, looked right and left at the people as though to reproach them with his death. At the foot of the scaffold he embraced his confessor, again pressed the crucifix to his lips, and then resigned himself to the executioner.

The ill-sharpened blade of the guillotine, instead of depriving Châlier of his life at one blow, fell, and was raised again five times without severing his head. He was hacked to death, not decapitated, with his head half-separated from his body. Châlier, looking at the executioner with reproachful glance, supplicated him to abridge his agony. A sixth stroke completed the execution. He tasted slowly of the death with which he had so often sought to inspire a thirst in the people — he was glutted with blood, but it was his own!

Châlier's blood, shed in defiance of the Convention, rendered all reconciliation impossible, and the Lyonese took refuge from their resistance in revolt.

XXII. The elements of the insurrection were numerous and various in Lyons. The Girondists overthrown; the Convention decimated, the national representation in Paris mutilated by the 31st of May; the anarchical oppression of Châlier and his mob long felt, and now broken; their confidence in their own strength; the rivalry of insurrection with Marseilles and Toulon; commerce destroyed; the priests persecuted; the life of every citizen menaced by the law of the suspected; the horror of terrorism, which shed, drop by drop, the blood of so many illustrious victims at Paris; and, finally, the royalism concentrated at Lyons, as in an asylum where it summoned around it its partisans from all quarters, and where it renewed its negotiations with foreign allies — all concurred in making this city the counter-revolutionary capital of the republic.

Still the insurrection did not, at once, hoist this colour, but remained covered by the semblance of republicanism. The administrators and presidents of section, who came to triumph at the Hôtel-de-Ville, were men of the Revolution, devoted to the system of the Girondists, and confining their ambition to the hope of rousing and avenging the friends of Vergniaud and Roland. The two deputies of this party, Chasset and Biroteau, who had taken refuge at Lyons, kept up by their orations and recriminations the spirit of the Gironde. The government of the city had assumed the form of a dictatorship. It was composed of administrators named and delegated by the sections, and called itself "the popular republican commission." These delegates had been nominated under the impression of horror against the Jacobins. They had selected even the most opposed to the Terrorists, and who, consequently, were the closest united to the counter-revolutionists.

This popular commission was headed by M. Rambaud, whose monarchical principles and sentiments were openly avowed. The other members were irritated Girondists, or *modérés*, who had compromised themselves, to whom concession to the Convention left no perspective but death. Commerce, whose opinions are ever guided by its interests, daily deplored the ruin of affairs, and secretly regretted royalty as a pledge for labour, credit, and security. The refugee nobility and priests, concealed in large numbers in Lyons, cast their resentments into this furnace, hoping to make of it an internal volcano, whose explosion would destroy the republic, and again open to the emigrants and proscribed princes the road to France and the throne.

XXIII. For a long time Lyons was the illusion of the emigrant royalists. As soon as this city had broken with the Convention, their emissaries believed that it had broken with the republic, and they re-appeared in order to avail themselves of the movement, and to turn it in the direction of royalty. The Comte d'Artois was then at Ham, in the Prussian territory. He immediately sent General the Marquis d'Autichamp to Savoy, with instructions to inspect as closely as possible the Lyonnese insurrection; to inspire resolution to the court of Turin, and to induce it to send a large body of troops to Chamberry.

Another officer of this prince was sent to Berne, to induce Switzerland to declare against France, and to join its forces with those of the king of Sardinia, in order to deal a decisive blow against the republic. Two envoys of the king of Sardinia, Baron des Etolles and the Comte de Maistre, seconded the efforts of the emigrants in the Helvetic cantons. Lord Fitzgerald, sent by the Britannic cabinet, was similarly employed in these cantons. But the aristocratic cantons of Switzerland, threatened on their own soil by the revolutionary spirit which was rife amongst them, dared not make any movement which might perhaps be the signal of the downfal of their constitution. The court of Sardinia, reinforced by eight or ten thousand Austrians, hastily threw its principal forces into the comté of Nice, to protect, first, all Piedmont, and then contented herself with defending, foot by foot, the gorges of Savoy against the few battalions under Kellermann. The Marquis d'Autichamp and the officers of Condé soon acknowledged the impossibility of giving openly emigrants a leader, to a movement which preserved the semblance of republicanism. The royalists of Lyons and the interior were obliged to renounce all hope of foreign interference. Their only expectation now laid in time, prudence, and victory in order to elevate loyalty at Lyons on the ruins of the Girondist party. Independently of the portion of the population devoted to them by opinion, they counted in the city four thousand non-juring priests, and six thousand nobles, determined to take arms against the forces of the Convention.

XXIV. Every attempt at reconciliation was hereafter useless. Lyons flew to arms; and rejecting, after a formal deliberation, the constitution of 1793, the city at last nominated a commandant general of its forces.

This general, whose name was until then unknown, was the Comte de Précy, a gentleman of Charolais, formerly colonel of the regiment of Vosges, belonging to that portion of the military nobility not yet denationalised by emigration, which preserved the patriotism of the citizen united to the fidelity of the gentleman; monarchical from honour, a patriot from the spirit of the age, a Frenchman by blood. He had served in Corsica, Germany, and in the constitutional guard of Louis XVI. He mingled in one and the same respect, the king and the constitution. He had fought on the 10th of August with the devoted officers who endeavoured to shield the throne with their bodies. He had bewailed the death of his master, but had not forsworn his country. Retiring to his estate of Semur in Brionnais, he silently submitted to the fate of the persecuted nobility. His friends at Lyons pointed him out to the republican commission as the fittest chiefs to direct and control the mingled movement which Lyons was venturing to try against anarchy. Précy was not the chief of a party, but was eminently a warrior. Still the moderation of his character, his practice in controlling soldiers, and that skill natural to men of his province, made him capable of uniting in one body all vague opinions, of preserving their confidence, and of leading them on to a particular end, without disclosing it to them beforehand. Précy was fifty-one years of age. His martial bearing, open countenance, his blue and placid eye, his firm but decided smile, the natural gift of command, united to persuasion, and his unwearied frame, made him a leader most agreeable in the eyes of the people.

XXV. The deputation of Lyons went to offer the command to M. de Précy. They found him as the Romans had in bygone days found their dictator, in his fields, with his spade in his hand, cultivating his flowers and vegetables. Précy modestly declared that he did not feel himself adequate to the part they had come to propose to him,—that the Revolution had broken his sword, and age abated his fire,—that civil war was repugnant to his soul,—that it was an extreme remedy, which destroyed more causes than it served,—that in rushing headlong into it, there was no refuge but victory or death,—that the organised forces of the Convention, directed against a single town, must sooner or later destroy Lyons,—that it could not be concealed that the combats and distresses of a lengthened siege would destroy a vast many citizens, and the scaffold would decimate the survivors. "We know it," replied the negotiators of Lyons; "but we have weighed in our minds the scaffold against the oppressions of the Convention, and we have chosen the scaffold." "And I," exclaimed Précy, "I accept it with such men!" He resumed his coat, which was hanging from the branches of a pear tree, returned to his house to take leave of his young wife, and resume his arms, which had been concealed for eighteen months, and then followed the men of Lyons.

On his arrival, he put on the civic uniform, mounted the tri-coloured cockade, and then, on horseback, reviewed the municipal army. The battalions of paid troops and national guard saluted him with unanimous acclamations. The command of the artillery was conferred on Lieutenant-Colonel de Chenelette, and that of the cavalry on Comte de Virieu. This latter gave the most royalist significance to the rising of Lyons. A celebrated orator of the Constituent Assembly, he had, at the commencement of the Revolution, claimed the rights of the nation, been present at the Assembly of Vizille in Dauphiné, demanded representation, by each individual and not by order in the *Etats Generaux*, and gone over, with forty-seven members of the nobility, (on the 25th of June) to the side of the people. Subsequently the Comte de Virieu had appeared to repent of these popular acts. He was anxious to support the throne, after having shaken it. He desired, like Mounier, Lally-Tolendal, Clermont-Tonnerre, and Cazalès, his friends, to reduce the Revolution to the acquirement of a right of representation divided between two chambers, in imitation of England. The combination of the aristocracy and democracy, moderated by the monarchy, seemed to him the sole government of liberty. The moment the National Assembly had broken the circle in which the aristocracy desired to encompass the third estate, every step of the Revolution had seemed to him excesses — all its acts crimes. He had quitted it as a man leaves a guilty confedéracy, shaking the dust from his feet, and cursing his error bitterly. He had devoted himself to the restoration of the destroyed monarchy and religion. He kept up a correspondence with the princes. He was in Dauphiné, his country, and at Lyons, the political man of the exiled monarchy. Of high blood, of a proscribed caste, a persecuted worship, civil war appeared to him thrice holy; as an aristocrat, a monarchist, and a christian. An intrepid soldier, a fluent orator, skilful politician, he had all the qualities of a party leader. Lyons, by making him second in command, revealed at once — not its avowed aim, but the concealed thought of its insurrection.

XXVI. The Convention, on its side, accepted the struggle with the unbending determination of a power, which does not yield before the amputation of a member to save the body. Its country was in its eyes not a city, but a principle.

It ordered Kellermann, general-in-chief of the army of the Alps, to leave his frontiers and concentrate his forces round Lyons. Kellermann, who disputed with Dumouriez the glory of Valmy, bore at this moment in the south the whole weight of the Austrians, the Allbroges, and the Piedmontese, whose forces crossed the other side of the Alps. With a small body of troops Kellermann bore down all resistance. The small *corps d'armée* which he had in Savoy showed itself like a moveable mound from one valley to the other, then crossing over the heights, every where checked the incursion which threatened from all sides.

Kellermann was one of those military men skilful and daring in combat, rather formed to lead soldiers than to mingle in the strife of parties; desirous of being the head of the armies of the Republic, but not the instrument of its severities. He dreaded to be styled in after days the destroyer of Lyons. He knew the horror which attaches in the memories of men to those who have mutilated their country — the renown of the Marius of the south was repugnant to him. He temporised for some time, tried the medium of negotiation, and, whilst he was assembling his troops, sent summons after summons to the Lyonnese. All was in vain. Lyons only replied by conditions, which imposed on the Convention the retractation of the 31st of May, the revocation of all the measures taken since that day, the reinstatement of the Girondist deputies, the disavowal of itself, the humiliation of the Mountain. Kellermann, pressed by the representatives of the people, Gautier, Nioche, and Dubois-Crancé, completed the blockade of the city. The Committee of Public Safety despatched Couthon and Maignet to rouse, *en masse*, the departments of Auvergne, Burgundy, Jura, Bresse, Ardèche, and to overwhelm Lyons beneath the battalions of patriotic volunteers, whom the Terror caused to spring from the earth at the voice of the representatives. Already from the borders of the Saône, the Rhône, the mountains of the Ardèche, and the populous vallies of the ancient Auvergne and Allier, columns, led by Reverchon, Javagnes, Maignet, and Couthon, advanced by every bye road towards Lyons. The peasants had no need of discipline to form behind troops of the line, or in the spaces between the camps, walls of bayonets, which now closely formed the blockade, and choked the city.

XXVII. Lyons had no fortifications except on the height of Croix-Rousse, and the chain of hills that run parallel with the Saône, from the rock of Pierre-Encise, where this stream enters the city to Faubourg de Sainte Foi, which rises at their extremity not far from the confluence of the Saône and Rhône. A bridge, named the Pont de la Mulatière, crossed the Saône at this point, and, defended by redoubts, offered a formidable obstacle to the besiegers. Between the city and this bridge a narrow causeway, easily rendered impassable, runs along the bank of the Rhône; the remaining space, which forms the point Perrache, was a low swampy spot, intersected by numerous dykes and watercourses, overgrown by willows and reeds, and which offered excellent cover for skirmishers. On the east, and on the side of the vast plains of Dauphiné, Lyons possessed no other defence than the Rhône, which, from its depth and swiftness, totally precludes any passage at this spot; and all that was required was the erection of two redoubts, thrown up at the bridges Guilotière and Morand — the only means of communication between the city and the Quartier des Brotteaux and the Faubourg de la Guilotière. Lyons possessed only forty pieces of cannon, with which to arm this immense extent; but guns were perpetually being cast, and, by the unwearied exertions of General Précy and his staff, the batteries, redoubts, and fortified bridges presented a formidable show of resistance to the troops of the Convention.

XXVIII. The besieging army sat down before Lyons in the commencement of August, and was divided into two camps — that of La Guilotière, composed of ten thousand men, well supplied with artillery, and commanded by General Vaubois; this camp bordered the Rhône, and cut off all retreat to the Alps, Dauphiné, and Savoy; and the camp of Mirabel, which extended from the north of the Rhône to the Saône, and threatened the Faubourg de la Croix Rousse, the strongest position.

Kellermann had fixed his head-quarters at the Château de la Pape, a short distance upon Mirabel, on the rocky bank of the Rhône, whilst a bridge of boats served as a means of communication between the two republican armies. The battalions of the Ardèche, Forez, Auvergne, and Bourgogne, extended in an immense line from the right bank of the Rhône to the heights of Limonest, which command the course of the Saône before it enters Lyons. But this line of troops was broken in many places by the advanced guard of the Lyonnese, and by the towns of Saint Etienne, Saint Chamond, and Montbrison, who sided with the besieged, and secured Lyons for communication with the mountains of Vivarais, and the road to Paris, through the Bourbonanis: thus the field of battle extended over a space of nearly sixty square leagues.

In proportion as the attacking forces took up their position, these troops fell back, and strengthened the army of Précy; and the general thus formed a force of about ten thousand men, who constituted the nucleus of his internal defences.

It was with them that Précy performed prodigies of valour and constancy, and arrested for two whole months all France before a handful of men, and the ruins of a burning city.

XXIX. The bombardment commenced on the 10th of August, and the batteries of Kellermann and Vaubois maintained, during eighteen days, an incessant fire of balls and shells on the city; whilst the partisans of Châlier indicated, by means of nocturnal signals, the quarters and the houses for destruction. During these fatal nights, the Quai de Saint Clair, the Place de Bellecour, and the Port du Temple, and the Rue Mercière, were set on fire three hundred times by the projectiles, burying beneath their ruins thousands of citizens.

The destruction of Lyons appeared, in the eyes of its inhabitants, the sacrilege of the republic; and the whole population flew to arms: for, after having sacrificed their wealth, their homes, and their altars, the sacrifice of their life appeared but small. The whole of the inhabitants were divided into two bodies, one of whom defended the ramparts; whilst the other checked the progress of the flames, carried ammunition and food to the troops, bore the wounded to the hospital, and buried the slain. The national guard, commanded by Madinier, numbered thirty-six thousand men. It armed the Jacobins, disarmed the clubists, and furnished numerous detachments of volunteers to defend the most exposed posts. Précy, Virieu, and Chelenette were continually riding about all parts of the city, and hastening from the camp to the council chamber, and thence to the combat; whilst the municipal authorities, with their president, Doctor Gilibert, an ardent and courageous Girondist, hesitated neither before responsibility nor death.

XXX. The disarmed Jacobins still continued to plot against the safety of the city. On the night of the 24th of August, during the bombardment of the Place de Bellecour, an incendiary fire, kindled by the hand of a female, wrapped the Arsenal, an immense building on the banks of the Saône, in flames, and destroyed an enormous quantity of arms and ammunition; but this calamity, whilst it weakened their means of resistance, did not weaken the arms or the hearts of the Lyonnese; and they made, by the light of the flames, a sortie, that drove back the republicans from the heights of Sainte Foi.

The bombardment produced no effect; and the Convention and the representatives of the people loudly blamed the inactivity of Kellermann, whilst the Sardinians profited by his absence to reconquer Savoy. Kellermann availed himself of this circumstance, and, alleging the necessity of his presence at the army of the Alps, demanded his recall; and the Committee of Public Safety named Doppet as his substitute; whilst, until his arrival at the camp, the temporary command was transferred to Dubois-Crancé.

Dubois-Crancé, the representative of the people, and lieutenant of Kellermann, was of noble birth; but had forsaken the royal for the popular cause. As a soldier he wished to destroy Lyons; but still more so as a republican; for he beheld within its walls the two great objects of his hatred — royalism, and the Gironde; and he communicated a share of his own energy to his troops.

He ordered the troops of Reverchon to attack the Château of la Duchère, which was defended by four thousand Lyonnese, and commanded the Faubourg de Vaise. The next night he advanced in person, at the head of the battalions of the Ardèche, under cover of a terrific fire from all his batteries, against the redoubts that covered the ponts d'Oullins and De la Mulatière, and carried them with the bayonet, before the three hundred Lyonnese who defended them could blow up the bridge: the Peninsula of Perrache was thus left open to the enemy, whilst the heights of Sante Foi were surrendered through treason.

The capture of these redoubts exposed the whole of the western side of Lyons, and Précy resolved upon a desperate effort to recover them. He led on his troops to the attack; and when his horse was shot under him, he rose, seized a soldier's musket, and, though wounded in two places, rushed on the enemy, forced them to fly, which they did, leaving the guns spiked, and the redoubts demolished.

But, whilst Précy was thus triumphant at Sainte Foi and at Sainte Irénée, General Doppet, profiting by the opening given to his troops by the capture of the bridge of La Mulatière, carried the two redoubts of Perrache, and advanced, with a tremendous column of men, to the heart of the city. This completed the capture, and balls were already sweeping the *quai du Rhône*, when Précy, informed of this result to the republicans, returning with the fragments of his battalions from the heights of Sainte Foi, crossed the Sâone and the city, rallied on his way all of his men whom he met, formed them into line on the Place de la Charité, covered the head of his column with four pieces of cannon, sent out a large body of skirmishers to the lower grounds of Perrache, to protect his right flank, and then advanced on the republican army, at double quick time, resolved to repulse them or die.

XXXI. Doppet's soldiers were awaiting the attack: no manœuvring was possible. The victory was for those most regardless of death. It was a hail of grape-shot, and the advanced companies were mown down by this storm of fire. Précy, springing over the dead bodies with the most daring of his volunteers, rushed against the foremost ranks of the republican soldiers, and cut them down by their guns as they stood. The shock was so tremendous, and their rage so desperate, that bayonets snapped short in the bodies of the combatants, and they did not utter a cry; whilst the republicans, driven back into the ditches at the sides, refused all quarter, and died to a man.

Précy, following up his victory, drove back Doppet's disordered lines to the bridge of La Mulatière. The republicans had not even time to cut down the bridge after they had crossed it, and they retreated to Oullins. Lyons breathed again for some days; but Précy had lost in this victory the *élite* of the Lyonnese youth. Fatigue, the battle, death, had reduced the defenders of a vast extent of ground to three thousand fighting men. Vaubois, the general of the Convention, did not, as is usual to besieged cities, spare the asylums consecrated to humanity. Lyons had hoisted a black flag over its hospital, and the artillerymen of the Convention riddled with balls and bomb-shells the walls and domes of the hospital, and the shells bursting in the wards, buried the wounded under the roofs where they had sought for safety. The course of the two rivers, and the roads which brought provisions to Lyons were stopped up in every direction. Provisions and ammunition were exhausted. The people murmured as they died at dying a useless death. The horses were all eaten, and they were casting the last bullets with the lead from the roofs of the houses. Succours were cut off by Kellermann. Marseilles was pacified by Carteaux. The fire which Lyons had hoped to kindle throughout the heart of France by its example, was everywhere quenched, and preyed on its walls alone. The whole city was one battle-field, strewed with the ruins of its edifices and the fragments of its population. There was only two days' nourishment of disputed horseflesh left for the population: the distribution of half a pound of oats, soaked in water, ceased. Couthon and Maignet addressed plausible and moderate terms of surrender to the town, and the popular commission communicated them to the assembled sections. They named deputies to go to Couthon's camp to confer with the generals and representatives; and they accorded fifteen hours to the city to afford time to those of its defenders who were most compromised to provide for their safety.

XXXII. On the night of the 8th of October, Précy assembled his companions in glory and misfortune. He announced to them that Lyons' last hour was come; that in spite of the promises of Couthon, terror and vengeance would enter the city in the morning with the republican army; that the scaffold would replace for them the field of battle; that not one of those whose functions, uniform, arms, and wounds would mark out as the principal defenders of the city would escape the resentment of the Convention and the informations of the Jacobins. He added, that as for himself, he had decided to die as a soldier, and not as a victim; that he should leave Lyons that night with the last and bravest of the citizens; that he should deceive the watchfulness of the republican camp by crossing on the side where he was least expected, and by going up the left bank of the Saône by the least frequented route to Macon; and that on reaching the height of Montmerle he should cross the river, throw himself into La Dombe, pass it, and thus reach the Swiss frontier by the passes of the Jura. "Let those," added he, "who will try this last chance of safety assemble with their arms and their most valuable possessions before daybreak in the Faubourg de Vaise, and follow me; — I will pass or perish with them."

Only three thousand men, almost all of them young, of noble birth, and attached to the royalist cause, met at the spot appointed by Précy. Three or four hundred women and children accompanied their husbands, brothers, and fathers, and determined to share their fate.

XXXIII. Whilst this assemblage was slowly forming beneath the thick trees of a wood called Le Bois de la Claire, several hundred more were assisting at a funeral service in honour of their dead comrades, which was celebrated in a neighbouring cavern. General Virieu was amongst the number who received the sacrament. When they were all assembled, Précy mounted one of the cannon, and addressed them. "I am satisfied with you — are you satisfied with me?" Loud cries of *Vive notre général* interrupted him. "You have done," continued Précy, "all that it was in human power to do for your unhappy city. It did not depend on me to render it free and triumphant, but it depends on you to again behold it happy and prosperous! Remember, that in desperate situations like the present, our only hope of safety is in discipline, and implicit obedience to orders. I need say no more to you, the time passes and the day is dawning. Rely on your general." "*Vive Lyons*," exclaimed the column, as a last farewell to their hearths and homes.

Précy had divided this *corps d'armée* into two columns, one composed of fifteen hundred men and four pieces of cannon, under his own command; the other of five hundred men, who, under the orders of Count de Virieu, escorted the women and the old men.

The instant they quitted the Faubourg de Vaise, five batteries, sustained by rocks posted behind the walls and bridges, opened a tremendous fire on them. Précy ordered the grenadiers to dislodge them; and one of his best officers, Burtin de la Rivière, put himself at their head. "Forward, grenadiers," cried he, pointing to the enemy; at this moment a ball struck him in the chest, and stretched him lifeless on the ground. The column hesitated; but Précy, rushing forward at the head of two companies, drove back the republicans. During this diversion the column passed, and he rejoined it when beyond the range of the batteries.

XXXIV. The column at last quitted the defile, and advanced, beneath the shelter of the rocks that overhang the Saône, to the gorges of Saint-Cyr. Virieu and his column were about to enter them, when eight thousand men from the camp of Limonest, commanded by the representative of the people, Reverchon, attacked and cut it to pieces. The massacre was so complete that no one knew the fate of Virieu. A dragoon asserted he had beheld him, after defending himself like a hero against several republican troopers, plunge with his horse into the river; but neither his body, his horse, nor his arms, were ever found. These circumstances made the Countess de Virieu, who escaped in the disguise of a peasant girl, believe for many years that he would yet return.

XXXV. Précy, alternately defending himself by means of his artillery against the cavalry that pursued him, and the tirailleurs from the camp of Limonest who hung on his flank, attacked a republican battery, carried it, and entered the forest of Alix. The left bank of the Saône swarmed with troops, and the only hope left the army was to disperse among the mountains of Forez. Précy held a council of war, and informed them of his resolution; but the majority were for continuing their flight across the Alps. During the debate the tocsin sounded, and the peasants surrounded the forest. A portion of the army abandoned their leader, crossed the Saône, and fell on the opposite bank. Précy, with only three hundred men, abandoned his guns and horses, quitted the Bois d'Alix, and marched for three whole days, pursued by the inhabitants and the light cavalry of Reverchon, until his little troop, now only a hundred and ten in number, reached the summit of Mount Saint Romain, a lofty point, defended by deep ravines, and where a few hamlets still furnished them provisions. Envoys were sent from the republicans, who offered all their lives except the general's; but his brave companions refused to separate their fate from his. Précy embraced them all, took off his uniform, set his horse at liberty, and disappeared amidst the thickets, under the guidance of one of his soldiers. Soon after an officer of hussars presented himself at the outposts. "Surrender your general, and you are saved," said he to the young Reyssié, Précy's aide-de-camp, and one of the heroes of the siege. "He is no longer amongst us," replied Reyssié, "and the proof is, that his horse, which he has abandoned, is now feeding there." "It is false," returned the officer, "you are the general, and I arrest you." At these words Reyssié shot the officer through the head, and then placing the muzzle of the second pistol to his own mouth, fell dead by his side. At the sound of the report the republicans fell on the remnant of the Lyonnese and massacred them, with the exception of a few who escaped amongst the thickets.

XXXVI. Précy, who learnt from a fugitive soldier of the slaughter of his comrades, wandered during three days amongst the ravines of the mountains. One of his soldiers, a peasant of Violay, on the banks of the Saône, at length guided him to a wood adjoining his father's farm, where he concealed and fed him until he procured him the disguise of a peasant. When at last the report of the death of Précy caused the ardour of pursuit to be somewhat slackened, the general succeeded in passing the gorges of the Jura, and, entering Switzerland, was treated in exile with the greatest respect: he returned to France with the Bourbons, and died under their reign unhonoured and unrewarded. It is the nature of princes and men to prefer those who have shared their faults to those who have served their interests. Lyons gave her general a magnificent funeral in the plain of Brotteaux, where he sleeps with the remains of his companions in arms. Civil wars leave nought save tombs.

## BOOK L.

I. The most painful part in the recital of civil wars is, that after having described the battle-field, the historian is compelled to recount the horrors of the scaffold and public executions.

The republican army entered Lyons with an appearance of moderation and kind feeling, calculated to give to their occupation of it rather the air of a reconciliation than a conquest. Couthon's first care was to command that the persons and property of the inhabitants should be scrupulously regarded.

Not the slightest tumult or violence was permitted; and peasants from Auvergne, who hurried to the scene of hoped-for plunder, bringing carts, mules, and sacks to carry off the spoils found in the richest city of France, were dismissed empty-handed, and sent back murmuring and discontented to their mountains. Lyons was selected as an example of the severity of the republic.

No longer satisfied with punishing individuals, Terror desired to make the punishment of an entire city at once an example, and a warning to all others.

The Jacobins, friends of Châlier, long compromised, both by the Royalists and Girondists of Lyons, came forth from their hiding-places calling loudly for vengeance on the representatives, and demanding of the Convention that their enemies should at last be given up to them.

For some time the representatives sought to restrain this fury, but finally they were compelled to yield to it, contenting themselves by reducing it to order by the institution of revolutionary tribunals, and decrees of extermination.

II. In this matter, as well, indeed, as in all the acts of the Reign of Terror, the odium of all the blood that was shed has been thrown upon one individual. The confusion of the moment, the despair of the dying, and the resentment of the survivors, made it difficult to judge who was guilty of the deed, and not unfrequently handed down for the execration of posterity the names of the most innocent. History has its chances, as well as the battle-field, and absolves or sacrifices many, whose character it is the work of after ages to place aright before the world.

Thus then were all the crimes committed by the republic of Lyons laid to the charge of Couthon, merely because he chanced to be the friend and confidant of Robespierre in the suppression of federalism, and in the victory of the united republicans over civil anarchy; but a careful examination of dates, facts, and words, impartially considered, will effectually do away with so unfair a charge.

Couthon entered Lyons rather as a peacemaker than an executioner, and opposed with all the earnestness his position permitted the excess to which the Jacobins carried their vengeance. He strove against Dubois-Crancé, Collot d'Herbois, and Dorfeuille, to moderate the wild fury of these fierce spirits, and was by them denounced to La Montagne and the Jacobins as one who prevaricated and showed an undue indulgence to their enemies. Finally he withdrew ere the first sentence of death was passed, in order to escape being either a witness or accomplice of the blood shed by the representatives of the implacable party of the Convention.

III. Couthon, Laporte, Maignet, and Châteauneuf Randon, triumphantly entered Lyons, at the head of their troops, and repaired to the Hôtel-de-Ville, escorted by all the Jacobins, and a noisy mass of people, clamouring loudly for the spoils of the rich, and the heads of the federalists.

Couthon addressed these turbulent persons, promising all they asked, but earnestly recommending the preservation of order, while he claimed for the republic the sole right of selecting her enemies, and punishing them according to their offences.

From the Hôtel-de-Ville the representatives went to take up their abode in the empty palace of the archbishopric, whose naked apartments, tottering walls, and dilapidated roof, beaten in during the bombardment of the city, gave to their abode the appearance of an encampment among some ancient ruins. Dubois-Crancé, second in command of the besieging army, and also a member of the Convention, presented himself at the palace in the course of the same evening, accompanied by his mistress, who invariably formed part of his military retinue. He had been unable to shelter himself, with his other colleagues, since they had been compelled to abide beneath smoking ruins and dismantled buildings.

The conqueror of Lyons, compelled to pass the night upon a wretched flock bed, and indignant at the contempt and indifference of his colleagues, who thus consigned him to the miserable lodging he occupied, departed from the archiepiscopal palace on the following morning, loudly complaining at the marked insolence of Couthon's behaviour towards him, and took up his abode in one of the hotels of the city; while the Jacobins, offended with the temporising measures of Couthon, ranged themselves around Dubois-Crancé, who that evening convened a meeting of the malcontents in the public theatre, whose scorched walls and half-burnt interior abundantly testified the resistance it had made, and the punishment that had followed such resistance. Dubois-Crancé reformed the Central Club, and harangued the Jacobins less in the tone of a commander than a confederate.

At the conclusion of his address the people uttered loud shouts, exclaiming, "Long live Dubois-Crancé," and perambulated the streets singing the most ferocious and sanguinary songs, while petitions to the Convention to continue the command of the army to this general were to be seen in the vilest spots, awaiting the signatures of all who should approach them.

Couthon and his colleagues, perceiving that Dubois-Crancé, in conjunction with the Jacobins, was on the point of gaining over the soldiery, while the Clubists were equally active with the officers, wrote to the Committee of Public Safety to request the immediate recall of the Jacobin general, and addressed a series of proclamations to the troops and people, earnestly recommending a strict observance of discipline, order, and clemency.

"Brave soldiers!" said Couthon, "before entering Lyons you swore to see the lives and property of its citizens respected, nor will you lightly regard a vow dictated by your own sense of honour, and the desire of preserving your well-earned glory from tarnish. Some unworthy individuals, unconnected with the army, may indeed be found willing to commit any excesses under the name of vengeance, in order to throw all the odium of their crimes upon you, brave republicans; but should you know such, denounce them — have them arrested — we will see prompt and fitting justice done!"

Couthon next commanded that the manufactories should be opened to all matters of trade, and commerce continued as usual. The Jacobins were alarmed at these measures, the army obeyed their general's advice, while Dubois-Crancé, checked in his career and recalled by the Convention, trembled before Couthon, and humbled himself before Robespierre. The next act of Couthon was to close the clubs, so imprudently thrown open by Dubois-Crancé.

"What," wrote Couthon to the Committee of Public

Safety, "what can you expect from the citizens, when they see the deputies themselves urging them on to violate the laws?" He confined himself, in conformity with the existing laws, in sending before a military tribunal every Lyonnese taken with arms in his hand after the capitulation of the city; and a few days subsequently, he, by order of the Committee of Public Safety, instituted a second court under the title of "*Commission of Popular Justice.*" This tribunal was to examine into the conduct of all such citizens who, not belonging to the military force of the town, had, nevertheless, taken part in the armed resistance made by Lyons to the republic. The slow and judicial proceedings of this assembly afforded, if not a protection for such as were innocent, at least the opportunity for calm reflection on the part of such as were guilty. Indeed, Couthon kept back the order he had received for the formation of this tribunal during a period of ten days, with a view to furnish such individuals as might have criminated themselves, either by word or deed, during the siege time, to escape; and no less than 20,000 of the citizens of Lyons, kindly forewarned by his intervention of the danger that threatened them, quitted that city and took refuge amid the mountains of Switzerland or du Forez.

IV. In the mean while La Montagne and the Jacobins of Paris, incensed, by means of the accusations of Dubois-Crancé, at what they considered the dilatoriness of Couthon, urged the Committee of Public Safety to strike a blow against the second city of the republic, which should serve as a warning to future revolutionists. Robespierre and Saint-Just, although the intimate friends of Couthon, and, moreover, perfectly satisfied with the victory achieved, finding their efforts to restrain the impetuosity of La Montagne utterly powerless, were compelled to affect a corresponding violence. Barrère, at all times ready to side with the most influential party, on the 12th of November ascended the rostrum, and read to the Convention, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, a decree, or rather a *Plébeide*, against Lyons. "Let Lyons be buried beneath her own ruins," exclaimed Barrère, "and let the plough pass over the site of her edifices, save those devoted to the reception of the poor and needy — workshops, hospitals, or buildings set apart for public instruction. The very name of the city shall perish amid its ruins, and it shall henceforward be known only by the appellation of the '*Free City!*' On the mouldering remains of this once-famed place shall be erected a monument to the eternal honour of the Convention, and to serve as an attesting memorial of both the crime and punishment of the enemies of the republic! This simple inscription shall tell the whole history:— '*Lyons took up arms against liberty — Lyons has ceased to be* A CITY!'" The decree exacted that a special commission, composed of five members, should inflict military punishment on all the anti-revolutionists of Lyons; that all the inhabitants should be disarmed, and the weapons found among the rich be distributed to the poor; that the city should be destroyed, more particularly the dwellings of the wealthy, and its name effaced from the map of republican towns; while the possessions of the richer part of its inhabitants should be divided among the patriots, by way of indemnity for their services!

The severity of this decree cast terror throughout Lyons. Couthon himself, while affecting to approve of it, believed it impracticable, and again allowed a lapse of twelve days ere he attempted to carry it into execution. This delay enabled the citizens to fly in great numbers. The representative with one hand held open the door for the victims to escape, while with the other he dealt at random the blows intended by the Jacobins to prove mortal. La Montagne, on the contrary, desired the utter annihilation of Lyons from the moment in which Barrère pronounced its doom.

Collot d'Herbois, a man fatal to the city of Lyons, inveighed, both in the Committee of Public Safety and at the Jacobinical meetings in Paris, against the supineness of those representatives of the people intrusted with the special commission to that city. It might have been thought that some personal and deadly hatred to Lyons and its inhabitants instigated the implacable animosity with which he sought its destruction. Report gave out that having neither talent nor any other requisite for the stage, he had chosen to make his *début* on the boards of the Lyons theatre, from whence he had been driven by the hisses and other unequivocal marks of disapprobation on the part of the audience. This he never forgot nor forgave; and the resentment of the disappointed actor glowed with undying fierceness in the breast of the representative; so that, while affecting to avenge the republic, he was, in fact, revenging his own wounded pride. Dubois-Crancé gave his fullest support to the eloquence of Collot d'Herbois. He one day, in the tribune of the Jacobins, displayed the severed head of Châlier, pointing out, one by one, the five wounds inflicted by the guillotine ere the work of decapitation was accomplished, and the axe had deprived the idol of the Lyonnese republicans of his life. Guillard, the friend of Châlier, raising his hands to heaven at the sight of so horrible a spectacle, exclaimed, "In the name of my country, and the brothers of Châlier, I demand atonement for the crimes of Lyons!"

V. Couthon and his colleagues at length determined to yield to the injunctions of La Montagne, and reorganised the revolutionary committees. Couthon even invested them with a right of search, of surveillance, and of the power of denouncing royalists and federalists; he ordained domiciliary visits, and the placing of seals upon the houses and papers of suspected persons, but he encumbered all these measures with conditions and regulations which partly neutralised their effect. Lastly, Couthon carried out, though only in appearance, the decree of the Convention which ordered the demolition of buildings. He went in state, accompanied by his colleagues and the municipality, on the place de Bellecour, more particularly devoted to the destruction, from the opinions of its inhabitants and the beauty of its construction. Carried in an arm-chair, as on a throne, above the ruins by four working men, Couthon struck with a silver hammer one of the houses of the place, pronouncing these words, "In the name of the law, I demolish thee."

A few beggars in tatters, pioneers, and masons, carrying on their shoulders pickaxes, levers, and axes, formed the *cortége* of representatives. These men applauded beforehand the downfal of these residences, whose ruin was gratifying to their envy; but Couthon, satisfied with having given this sign of obedience to the Convention, commanded silence and then dismissed them.

The demolition was delayed until the time when the inhabitants of the place should have conveyed away their furniture and valuables.

After the ceremony, the representatives passed a decree ordering the sections to enrol each twenty men, to demolish the buildings, and to supply them with crowbars, hammers, tumbrils, and wheel-barrows, necessary for the removal of the rubbish. Women, children, old men, were allowed to work in proportion to their strength. Pay was given to them, at the cost of the despoiled owners; but yet the work of demolition was not done. Couthon,—again reprimanded by the Committee of Public Safety for his dilatoriness in carrying out his appointed work, and guilty in the eyes of the Jacobins of the blood he would not shed, warned besides of the near arrival of other representatives, charged with expediting the desired vengeance,—wrote to Robespierre and Saint-Just. He entreated his friends to relieve him of the weight of a mission which weighed upon his mind, and to send him to the South. Robespierre recalled Couthon, whose departure was the signal of the calamities of Lyons. The blood he had spared, now flowed. The representatives Albitte and Javogues arrived; Dorfeuille, the president of the commission of popular justice, had the guillotine erected in the Place des Terreaux, and also in the little city of Feurs, another centre of national vengeance in the heart of the insurgent mountains.

Dorfeuille presided at the head of a central club, at a funereal fête consecrated to the manes of Châlier. "He is dead!" exclaimed Dorfeuille; "he died for his country! Let us swear to imitate him, and to punish his assassins!"

Dorfeuille then read, amidst the sobs and imprecations of the crowd, a letter written by Châlier, at the instant he was ascending the scaffold. His adieux to his friends, his parents, the woman whom he loved, were full of tears; to his friends and brethren, the Jacobins, full of enthusiasm. Liberty, democracy, and religion mingled in a confused invocation of Châlier's, to the people, to God, and to immortality. His death gave solemnity to his language, and the people received it as the legacy of a patriot.

VI. Dorfeuille presided for the first time on the morrow, at the tribunal; Albitte and his colleagues, who had just succeeded Couthon, summoned the army of Ronsin to Lyons, and formed a similar corps in each of the six adjoining departments. Both within and without the walls, the fugitives found nought save treachery; the suspected nought save betrayers; the accused nought save executioners. Thousands of priests, nobles, merchants, farmers, crowded the prisons of the departments, and were despatched in carts to Lyons, where five spacious prisons received them for a few days, to surrender them to the scaffold.

Amongst the number of the victims whose body or mind was thus early doomed to death, was a young girl named Mademoiselle Alexandrine des Echerolles, who had lost her mother, and whose father had fled. She came daily to the gate of the prison, entreating permission to see her aunt, who had supplied the place of her mother, and who had been confined there on suspicion of royalism. She saw her led to execution, and followed her to the foot of the scaffold. It is to her pen that we owe some of the most touching and dramatic episodes of the siege.

Albitte, deemed too lenient, was superseded, like Couthon, by Collot d'Herbois and Fouché, the new proconsuls appointed by the Montagne. Collot d'Herbois was filled with a ferocious vanity which saw no glory save in excess, and whose fury was tempered by no moderation. Fouché was believed to be a fanatic; he was only a skilful dissimulator. More of an actor by nature than Collot by profession, he played the part of Brutus with the soul of Sejanus. Brought up in a cloister, Fouché had learnt that monkish humility that stoops only to rise the higher; and he devoted himself to the tyranny of the people, until he could become the instrument of a new Cæsar. He sought to ingratiate himself with Robespierre, and would have wed the sister of the deputy of Arras; but Robespierre repulsed Fouché from his heart and his family. Fouché, affecting exaggeration in his principles, had become intimately connected with Chaumette and Hébert. Chaumette was a native of Nevers, and had sent Fouché there to propagate the *Terror;* and in a few months he effaced the work of ages in the manners, fortunes, and laws of the province. More greedy than sanguinary, he imprisoned more than he immolated; threatened more than he destroyed. The plunder of the churches, the châteaus, and the sums extorted from the wealthy, which he sent to Paris, attested the energy of his measures, and caused the tolerance of his opinions to be overlooked. Impiety passed, in his eyes, for patriotism. "The French people," he wrote, "recognise no other dogmata than those of their sovereignty and omnipotence." He proscribed all religious emblems, even on the tombs; and ordered a figure of Sleep to be engraved on the gates of the cemeteries, with the inscription, "*Death is an eternal slumber.*"

VII. Such were the two men sent by the Montagne to preside at the punishment of Lyons. Lyons wished to add to them Montaut, a stern yet virtuous republican; but he, on learning what was required of him, by the example of Couthon, firmly refused to accept the office. The two representatives commenced by accusing Couthon of unnecessarily adjourning the destruction of the city, and the execution of the condemned. "The public accusers are about to proceed," they wrote: "the tribunal will judge three days in one, and the use of powder will accelerate the demolition of the city."

Collot had brought with him from Paris a band of Jacobins, selected from the most fanatic of this party, and Fouché brought another from Nièvre, fearing lest old associations, or a natural feeling of compassion for fellow-citizens, might corrupt the inflexibility of the gaolers of Lyons. They paraded through the streets an urn containing the ashes of Châlier, and on arriving at the altar they had erected to his memory, they knelt before it. "Châlier!" exclaimed Fouché, "the blood of aristocrats shall be the incense we will offer you."

The sacred symbols of religion were destroyed, and the churches profaned by impious and indecent songs, dances, and ceremonies. "We have yesterday founded the religion of patriotism," wrote Collot. Tears fell from every eye at the sight of the dove that consoled Châlier in his prison, and which seemed to mourn over his image. Vengeance, vengeance, was the unanimous demand. "We have sworn that the people shall be avenged, and all that vice and crime have erected shall be destroyed. The traveller shall behold in the ruins of this superb and rebellious city nought save a few huts, inhabited by the friends of equality."

VIII. The heads of ten members of the municipality fell next day, and a mine exploding, destroyed some of the finest buildings in the city. A patriotic proclamation, signed by

Fouché and Collot, to the clubbists of Lyons and the departments of the Loire and the Rhône, to stimulate their energy, thus summed up their rights and their duties:—"Every thing is permissible to those who act in the spirit of the Revolution. The desire of a legitimate vengeance is an imperative necessity. Citizens, all those who have favoured rebellion, directly or indirectly, have hazarded their heads to the block. If you are patriots you will be able to distinguish your friends, you will sequestrate all others. Let no consideration stop you—neither age, sex, nor relationship. Take by force all that a citizen has that is superfluous—for any man to have more than he requires is an abuse. There are persons who have heaps of linen, shirts, and shoes: claim all this. By what right should any man keep in his wardrobes valuables or superfluous garments? Let gold, silver, and all precious metals flow into the national treasury! Extirpate all forms of worship: the republican has no God but his country. All the communes of the republic will hasten to imitate that of Paris, which, on the ruins of a Gothic form of worship, is about to elevate the Temple of Reason. Aid us in striking these great blows, or we shall ourselves strike you."

These proclamations of vengeance, pillage, atheism, were so many indirect reproaches to Couthon, who had held such different language a few days previously.

Conformably to the spirit of this proclamation, Fouché and Collot created commissaries of confiscation and delation. They actually awarded a sum of thirty francs on each denunciation, the sum being doubled for certain heads, such as those of nobles, priests, monks, and nuns. They only gave the price of blood to him who in person directed the searches of the revolutionary army, and who delivered the suspected person over to the tribunal. A multitude of wretches lived upon this infamous traffic in the lives of citizens. Cellars, lofts, sewers, the woods, nocturnal emigrations into the neighbouring mountains, disguises of every kind, in vain were resorted to by compromised men and trembling women to conceal themselves from the incessant searches of the greedy informer. Hunger, cold, fatigue, sickness, domiciliary visits, treason delivered them, after some days, over to the satellites of the temporary commission.

The cells were choked with prisoners. Whilst proprietors and merchants were perishing, the houses were destroyed beneath the hammer. Shopkeepers, lodgers, families expelled from the proscribed houses, had scarcely time to leave their houses, to carry off the old, the infirm, and children, to other residences. Every day the pickaxe was seen attacking staircases, or tilers unroofing houses. Whilst the alarmed inhabitants were throwing their furniture out of the windows, and mothers carried the cradles of their children over the ruined rafters, twenty thousand pioneers of Auvergne and the Lower Alps were employed in razing the abodes to the ground. The cellars and foundations were blown up with gunpowder. The pay of the demolishers amounted to 400,000 francs *(16,000l.)* for each décade; and the demolitions cost 15,000,000 of francs *(600,000l.)*, to destroy a capital of more than 300,000,000 *(12,000,000l.)* worth of edifices!

Hundreds of workmen perished buried beneath the walls that fell in, having been recklessly undermined. The quai Saint Clair, the two façades of the Place de Bellecour, the quais of the Saône, the streets inhabited by the commercial aristocracy, the arsenals, hospitals, monasteries, churches, fortifications, pleasure-houses on the sides of the hills on each bank of the river, presented but the appearance of a city riddled by cannon-balls after a protracted siege. Lyons, almost uninhabited, was silent in the midst of its ruins. Workmen, without employ or bread, enrolled and subsidised by the representatives at the cost of the rich, seemed, axe in hand, to revel over the carcase of the city which had nourished them. The noise of walls falling, the dust of destroyed houses which hung over the city, the sound of cannon fired, and the discharges of the musketry, which mowed down the inhabitants, the rolling of carts, which from the five prisons of the city conveyed the accused to the tribunal, and the condemned to the guillotine, were the only signs of life amongst the population: the scaffold was its sole spectacle, — the acclamations of a people in rags, at every head which fell at their feet, was the only fête.

IX. The Commission of Popular Justice instituted by Couthon was transformed, on the arrival of Ronsin and his army, into a revolutionary tribunal. The day after the arrival of this body of soldiers — these lictors of the republic — the executions began, and lasted, without interruption, for ninety days. Eight or ten condemned died every day, on leaving the tribunal, on the scaffold erected permanently in front of the steps leading to the town-hall. Water and sand, spread every evening after the executions around this sewer of human blood, did not suffice to cleanse the earth. A red and fetid mud, constantly trampled by a people thirsting to see their fellow creatures die, covered the square and reeked in the air. Around these actual shambles of human flesh there was a scent of death. The exterior walls of the Palais Saint Pierre and the façade of the town-hall were smeared with blood. On the mornings of the days of November, December, and January, the most fertile in homicides, the inhabitants of the vicinity saw rising from the soil a moisture — it was the blood of their fellow-countrymen, immolated on the previous evening, the shade of the city, as it evaporated in the sunshine. Dorfeuille, on the requisition of the quarter, was compelled to remove the scaffold to a distance: he placed it over an open sewer. The blood, trickling through the planks, flowed into a ditch ten feet deep, which carried it to the Rhône, together with the filth of the neighbourhood. The washerwomen were compelled to change the spot of their washing places, that they might not wash their linen and bathe their arms in blood-stained water; and when at last the executions, which increased like the pulsations of an inflamed body, reached an amount of twenty, thirty, and even forty a day, the instrument of death was placed in the centre of the Pont Morand, over the river. They swept away the blood, and cast the heads and bodies over the parapets into the swiftest current of the Rhône. The sailors and peasants of the islets and lower grounds which intersect the course of the river between Lyons and the sea found perpetually the heads and bodies of men stranded on those islets, and caught in the bulrushes and osier beds which surrounded them.

These victims were nearly all the flower of the youth of Lyons and the neighbouring countries. Their age was their crime, as it made them suspected of having fought. They went to death with all the daring of youth, as if they were marching to battle. In the prisons, as in bivouacs the night before a battle, they had but a handful of straw each man on which to lay their limbs on their dungeon's stones. The danger of compromising themselves by appearing to take an interest in their fate, and dying with them, did not intimidate parents, friends, or servants in their tenderness. Night and day large numbers of wives, mothers, and sisters wandered round the prisons. Gold and tears, which flowed abundantly, opened the hearts of gaolers, and obtained for them interviews, conversations, and last farewells. Escapes were frequent. Religion and charity, so active and courageous in Lyons, did not recede in presence of suspicion or disgust, but penetrated into these subterranean retreats to aid the sick and suffering, nourish the hungry, and console the dying.

More than six thousand prisoners were at a time locked up in these depôts of the guillotine.

X. A whole generation was there swallowed up. There were assembled all the men of condition, birth, fortune, and various opinions, who, since the Revolution, had embraced the opposite side, and who, in common rising against oppression, were here united in the same crime and the same death. Clergy, nobility, citizens, tradesmen, people, — were all mingled there together. No citizen against whom an informer, an envious neighbour, an enemy appeared, escaped from captivity, and but few captives from death. All who had name, fortune, profession, a manufactory, a house, in town or country — any one who was suspected of any inclination to the cause of the rich, — was arrested, accused, condemned, and executed, by anticipation in the minds of the proconsuls and their purveyors. The *élite* of a capital and several provinces — La Bresse, La Dombe, Le Forez, Le Beaujolais, Le Vivarais, Le Dauphiné — passed through these prisons and these scaffolds. The city and the town seemed decimated. Castles, first-class houses, manufactories, even the residences of the country people, were shut up within the circumference of twenty leagues round Lyons. Thousands of properties were sequestrated. Doors and windows were sealed up. Nature herself seemed affected by the terror of man. The anger of the Revolution had attained the power of a divine scourge. The plagues of the middle ages did not throw more gloom over the appearance of a province. On the roads from Lyons to the neighbouring villages and towns nothing was met but detachments of the revolutionary army, forcing doors in the name of the law, searching cellars, lofts, even the litter of the cattle, striking the walls with the butts of their muskets, or leading, chained two and two, fugitives discovered in their retreats, and followed by their weeping families.

Thus were brought back to Lyons all the notable and illustrious citizens whom Couthon had allowed to escape — sheriffs, mayors, aldermen, administrators, judges, magistrates, advocates, doctors, architects, sculptors, surgeons, governors of hospitals, benevolent societies — accused of having fought with or succoured the combatants or the wounded, or having given food to the insurgent people, or made secret vows for the triumph of the defenders of Lyons. To these they added the relations, sons, wives, daughters, friends, and servants, assumed to be accomplices of their husbands, brothers, fathers, or masters — guilty of being born on the spot, and of having breathed the air of insurrection.

Daily the principal turnkey of the gaol read with a loud voice the names of the prisoners summoned before the tribunal. Every breath was suspended whilst the summons was being read. Those thus called upon embraced for the last time their friends, and distributed their beds, quilts, clothes, and money, amongst the survivors. They assembled in long files of sixties or eighties in the court, and then threaded the crowd on their way to the tribunal. The judges were nearly all strangers, and in no way intimidated by any fear of responsibility hereafter. These five judges, each of whom separately had a human heart, judged together like a mechanical instrument of murder. Watched by a suspicious mob, they themselves trembled under the terror with which they smote others. Still their activity did not satisfy Fouché and Collot d'Herbois. These representatives had promised to the Jacobins of Paris prodigies of rigorous administration, yet the slowness of these trials and sentences caused them to be accused of half-measures. The days of September rose as an example before them. Dorfeuille thus wrote to the representatives of the people: — "A great act of justice is in preparation, of a nature to astound future ages. To give to this act the majesty which should characterise it — that it may be as grand as history — it is requisite that the administrators, the army, magistracy, and public functionaries should be present, at least by deputations. I wish this day of justice to be a festival. I say a festival; and that is the right word. When crime descends to the tomb, humanity breathes again, and it is the festival of virtue."

XI. The representatives ratified Dorfeuille's propositions, and punishment *en masse* supplied the place of individual executions. The accused were conducted with unusual ceremony to the Hôtel-de-Ville, where a summary interrogatory, in a few minutes, united all in one common condemnation and thence they marched in procession towards the banks of the Rhône, where they made them cross the bridge, leaving the guillotine behind them, like a worn-out weapon.

On the other side of the bridge, in the lower plain of the Brotteaux, they had dug a double ditch in the marshy soil, between two rows of willows. The sixty-four condemned persons, handcuffed two and two, were placed in a line in this alley, beside their open sepulchre. Three pieces of cannon, loaded with ball, were placed at the extremity of the avenue. Right and left, detachments of dragoons, sword in hand, seemed waiting the signal to charge. On the mounds of earth extracted from this ditch, the most eminent members of the municipality — presidents and orators of clubs, functionaries, military authorities, the staff of the revolutionary army, Dorfeuille, and his judges — were grouped, as if on the steps of an amphitheatre; whilst from the top of a balcony of one of the confiscated hotels in the Quai du Rhône, Collot d'Herbois and Fouché, with telescope in hand, seemed to preside over this ceremonious extermination.

The victims sang in chorus the hymn which had led them into battle. They seemed to seek in the words of this, their last song, the forgetfulness of the blow which was about to strike them.

> "To die for one's country,
> Is the happiest and most enviable fate!"

The artillerymen listened, with lighted match in hand, to these dying men singing their own death-song. Dorfeuille allowed the voices to finish slowly the grave modulations of the last verse, then raising his hand as a signal, the three cannon exploded at once. The smoke concealed the guns, and for a moment hovered over the ground: drums beat to stifle all cries. The mob pressed forward to contemplate the effect of the carnage. The artillerymen had been deceived; the undulations of the line of victims had allowed the balls to deviate, and twenty prisoners had fallen beneath the fire, dragging down with them their living companions, who were thus associated in their dying throes, and inundated with their blood. Shrieks, moans, fearful gestures, came from this confused heap of mutilated members, carcases, and survivors. The artillerymen then loaded with grape, and fired; but even then the massacre was incomplete. A heartrending cry, heard across the Rhône, even into the city, rose from this field of agony. Some limbs still palpitated, some hands were still extended towards the spectators, imploring the final blow. The soldiers shuddered. "Forward, dragoons," cried Dorfeuille, "now charge." The troopers, at this command, put spurs to their horses, who dashed forward at a gallop, and with the point of the sabre and pistol shots they killed the last victim. This scene of horror and agony was protracted for more than two hours!

XII. A sullen murmur of indignation hailed the recital of this horrid scene in the city. The people felt dishonoured; and compared itself to the most cruel tyrants of Rome, or the executioners of Saint Bartholomew. The representatives stifled this murmur by a proclamation which commanded that all should approve, and declared pity to be conspiracy. Citizens, even the most elegant females, then affected revolutionary rigour, and concealed their horror beneath the mask of adulation. The guillotine — instrument of punishment — became for some weeks a civic decoration and an ornament at festivals. The taste of the day, in compliment to the representatives, made of this machine in miniature a hideous ornament of the furniture and dress of the Jacobins. Their wives, daughters, and mistresses wore small guillotines in gold, or as buckles, in the bosom, or as earrings!

Fouché, Collot d'Herbois, and Dorfeuille sought to stifle remorse beneath the most unblushing contempt for public feeling. Two hundred and nine Lyonnese prisoners were awaiting their sentence in the gloomy prison of Roanne. The sound of the cannon which had slaughtered their fellow-countrymen had penetrated the dungeons of these captives.

They prepared for death, and passed the night, some in prayers and confessing themselves to disguised priests, the youngest, in last adieus to their youth and life, in libations and songs that braved death. Collot d'Herbois came to the prison that night, and hearing these voices, exclaimed: "What is the temper of that youth which thus sings its death-song!"

At ten o'clock in the morning a battalion drew up before the gate of the prison, whose iron jaws opening, allowed two hundred and nine citizens to pass out. The gaoler counted them with his finger as they issued forth, like a herd of cattle being marked for the day's consumption. They were fastened two and two. The long file, in which each recognised a son, a brother, a parent, a friend or neighbour, advanced with a firm step towards the Hôtel-de-Ville. The last farewells, extended hands, deploring looks, mute adieus, were addressed to them from windows and doors, through the hedge of bristling bayonets. Some Jacobins and a crowd of degraded women apostrophised the victims, and overwhelmed them with outrages, to which they only replied with looks of disdain, and said to those whose countenances were saddened or eyes filled with tears: "Weep not for us,—no one bewails martyrs."

The Hall of Law was too small to receive them, and they were sentenced in the open air, under the windows of the Hôtel-de-Ville. The five judges, in the costume and paraphernalia of their functions, appeared in the balcony, made out a list of names, pretended to deliberate, then pronounced a general verdict: a formality of sentence to death which gave to assassination *en masse* the hypocritical appearance of a legal verdict. Vainly from these two hundred voices were individual appeals, protestations of patriotism, made to the judges and the people. Inflexible judges and the sullen people only replied by contemptuous silence. The column, pressed forward by the soldiers, advanced towards the Pont Morand; on reaching the bridge, the officer in command counted the prisoners, to assure himself that no one had escaped on the way: instead of two hundred and nine, there are two hundred and *ten*. There were more than the due number of victims. Who was the innocent man?—Who the guilty?—Who would be legally put to death?—Who was to be assassinated without judgment? The officer felt the horror of such a situation, halted the column, and sent word of this awful doubt to Collot d'Herbois. The solution of this scruple would have required a fresh examination: the examination would have adjourned the death of two hundred and nine. The people were there; death was waiting. "What consequence," answered Collot d'Herbois, "is one more! One too many is better than one too few. Besides," he added, in order to wash his hands of this murder, "he who shall die to-day will not die to-morrow. Let it be all concluded!"

The extra victim was an avowed Jacobin, who filled the air with his cries, and protested in vain against this fearful error.

XIII. The file resumed its march, singing,

> "To die for one's country
> Is the happiest and most enviable fate,"

until it halted between the willows in the narrow causeway, still moistened with the blood of the previous evenings. The cuttings become shallower, and covered with fresh and soft earth, showed that the ditches were but half filled up, and were awaiting other carcases. A long rope was extended from one willow to another. They fastened each prisoner to this rope by the end of the cord which confined his hands behind his back. Three soldiers were placed four paces off in face of each victim, and the cavalry placed in small bodies behind. At the word *fire!* the nine hundred and thirty soldiers at once directed three bullets against every breast. A cloud of smoke covered the scene for a moment, and then lifting, there were seen, besides the corpses strewn on the ground, or hanging to the cord, more than one hundred young men still erect. Some, with wild look, seemed petrified with horror; others, half dead, entreated their executioners to finish them; others, freed from the rope by the balls, crawled on the ground, or fled staggering towards the willows. The terror-struck spectators, the soldiers affected by the scene, turned away their eyes in order to allow them to flee. Grandmaison, who presided this day at the execution, gave orders to the cavalry to follow the fugitives, and they were hewed down by the dragoons beneath their horses' feet. One only, named Merle, the mayor of Mâcon, a patriot, but devoted to the Gironde, contrived to drag himself, bleeding as he was, to the reeds of the marsh. The troopers in pity turned aside, affecting not to see him as he made his way to the river. He was just entering a boat, in order to reach the city unperceived, when a group of merciless Jacobins recognised him by the blood that flowed from his wounded hand, and threw him headlong and living into the Rhône — dead at the same moment and the same hour by the twofold death of fire and water.

The soldiers, with great reluctance, finished with the bayonet and the butt-end of their muskets, the victims expiring in the causeway, and falling night extinguished their dying groans. Next day, when the gravediggers came to bury the dead, several bodies still palpitated, and the pioneers killed them outright with blows of the pickaxe before they covered them over with the blood-stained mould. "We have revived," wrote Collot d'Herbois to the Convention, "the progress of republican justice — it is prompt and terrible as the people's will: it should strike like thunder, and leave but ashes."

The Revolution had found its Attilas.

XIV. Montbrison, Saint Etienne, Saint Chamond, all Lyonnese colonies, were the theatres of the same atrocities, or supplied victims. Javogues, the representative of the people, had set up a guillotine at Feurs, and a revolutionary tribunal, established by him, gave to the instrument of punishment the same activity as at Lyons. The river provinces of the Haute-Loire were purged of all aristocratic, royalist, and federalist blood, which flowed like water under the axe, which, like that at Lyons, was deemed too slow, and gunpowder was used instead of steel. A magnificent alley of limes was converted into a place of execution, like the funereal willows of Brotteaux, and twenty-two persons *per diem* were shot there. The same impatience for death seemed to possess executioners and victims: the one had the phrensy of murder, the other the enthusiasm of death. The horror of living had removed the horror of death. Young girls and children begged to fall beside their fathers and kinsfolk thus shot down; and daily the judges had to refuse the supplications of despair, imploring the penalty of death, less fearful than the punishment of surviving. Every day they granted or refused these requests. The barbarity of these proconsuls did not await crime, but prejudged it in name, education, and rank. They struck in anticipation of future crimes. They anticipated years. They immolated infancy for its opinions to come, old age for its past opinions, women for the crimes of tenderness and tears. Mourning was forbidden, as under Tiberius. Many were punished for having had a sorrowful countenance, or a mourning garb. Nature was distorted into an accusation, and to be pure it had become requisite to repudiate it. All virtues were reversed in the human heart. The Jacobinism of the proconsuls of Lyons had overthrown the instincts of men; false patriotism had overthrown humanity. Touching and sublime traits shone in this saturnalia of vengeance. The human mind rose to the tragic height of these dramas. Heroism burst forth in all ages, in all sexes. Love braved the executioners; the heart revealed mines of tenderness and magnanimity.

XV. Young Dutaillon, only fifteen years of age, conducted to death with his family, rejoiced at the foot of the scaffold that he was not separated from his father, but by a stroke of the axe. "He is keeping me a place above," he said to the executioner; "do not let us keep him waiting!"

A son of M. de Rochefort was conducted, with his father and three relatives, to the avenue, to be shot there. The soldiers fired, the three condemned fell; the boy, saved by the pity of the men, was not touched. "Mercy, mercy for him!" exclaimed the softened spectators. "He is only sixteen, and may become a good citizen." The executioners hesitated: Javogues promised his life. "No, no; none of your mercy—none of your life!" cried the youth, embracing his father bleeding to death. "I wish for death! I am a royalist! — *Vive le roi!*"

The daughter of a mechanic, a very lovely girl, was accused of refusing to wear the republican cockade. "Why are you so obstinate?" inquired the president, "that you refuse to wear the redeeming emblem of the people?" "Because you wear it," answered the young girl. The president, Parrein, admiring this courage, and blushing to send so much youth to death, made a sign to the turnkey to put a wreath in her hair. She, however, observing this, snatched it thence, trampled it under foot, and then went to death.

Another, all whose relatives had been massacred on the previous evenings, made his way through the crowd, and kneeling full of despair at the foot of the tribunal, prayed the judges to sentence him also. "You have slain my father, my brothers, my bride!" he exclaimed. "I have no longer family, love, or destiny in this world: I desire death! My religion forbids me to kill myself; do you put me to death!"

A young prisoner, named Couchoux, condemned to die next day with his aged father of eighty, and deprived of the use of his legs, was cast into the cells of the Hôtel-de-Ville. During the night he found means to escape, by a sewer communicating with the bed of the river. On finding the opening out, he returned to seek his father. The old man made every effort to support himself, but in vain: he fell down exhausted, conjuring his son to save his life, and abandon him to his fate. "No," replied the young man, "we will live or die together!" He then took his father on his shoulders, advanced crawling along the subterranean passage, and thus bearing his burden along undiscovered in the darkness, he found a boat on the banks of the Rhône, and, entering it with him, both escaped.

A female, twenty-seven years of age, whom love had exalted to heroism during the siege, and who had fought with the intrepidity of a soldier—named Madame Cochet—harangued the people from the cart, even when conveying her to the scaffold. "You are cowards," she said, "to sacrifice a woman who did her duty in fighting to defend you from oppression! It is not life that I deplore, but the child I bear in my bosom. Innocent, it will suffer my punishment. Monsters," she added, "they will not wait for a few days; they feared that I should produce an avenger of liberty!" The people, moved by the approaching maternity of this heroine, her youth and beauty, followed her in silence. A cry of "mercy," was heard from the people, but the sound of the falling knife, which cut short two lives, interrupted the tardy appeal. Forty-five heads were carried off on this day in the tumbril of the executioner. To counterbalance these movements of pity in the multitude, hired partisans were retained by the proconsuls, and placed at the windows of the square, as in the boxes of a theatre, to insult the doomed, and applaud the punishments.

XVI. A young girl of seventeen, whose features bore a marked likeness to those of Charlotte Corday, had fought by the side of her brother and lover in one of the batteries. Her name was Marie Adrian. "What is your name?" demanded the judge, struck by her youth and beauty. "Marie," she replied; "the name of the mother of that God for whom I am about to die." "Your age?" "Seventeen, the age of Charlotte Corday." "How, at your age, could you combat against your country?" "I fought to defend it." "Citoyenne," said one of the jury, "we admire your courage, what would you do if we granted you your life?" "I would poignard you as the murderers of my country."

She ascended the scaffold in silence, more alarmed by the gaze of the crowd than the near approach of death; refused the assistance of the executioner, and twice exclaimed, "*Vive le roi!*" After her death, the executioner found amongst her garments a note written with blood; it was the farewell letter of her lover, who had been shot some days before, in the Plaine des Brotteaux. "To-morrow at this hour I shall have ceased to live," he wrote: "I cannot die without telling thee, for the last time, how well I love thee; and were they to offer me my pardon on condition I would say the contrary, I would not accept it. I have no ink, and I write to thee with my blood, which I would fain mingle with thine for all eternity. Adieu, dear Marie: weep not, in order that the angels in heaven may deem thee as beautiful as I do. I shall await thee,—tarry not." The two lovers were only separated by four-and-twenty hours: the people knew how to admire, but not to pardon.

The executions *en masse* only ceased in consequence of the indignant refusal of the soldiers to be converted into executioners. "Do you need a more active executioner?" wrote the Jacobin Achard to Collot d'Herbois, "I offer my services." The corpses that covered the banks of the Rhône threatened to cause a pestilence, and the adjoining towns and villages complained of the infected state of the air and the water. The Jacobins rekindled their enthusiasm by patriotic banquets, at which Dorfeuille, Achard, Grandmaison, and the principal judges and assistants, drank to the rapidity of death, and the activity of the headsman. "Republicans," exclaimed Dorfeuille, "this banquet is worthy the sovereign people. Let us, administrators, members of the tribunals, public functionaries, meet daily to quaff out of the same goblet the blood of tyrants!"

Collot d'Herbois, recalled to Paris upon the first expressions of indignation called forth by these massacres, justified himself to the Jacobins. "We are called Anthropophagi," said he: "they are aristocrats who give us this appellation. They carefully inquire into the death of the anti-revolutionists, and spread abroad the report that they do not perish at the first stroke. The Jacobin Châlier did not die at the first blow; the least drop of patriotic blood that flows seems wrung from my heart. I have no pity for conspirators: we have shot two hundred at a time, and yet this is imputed to us as a crime. And yet is not this a fresh proof of sensibility,—the thunder of the people strikes them and reduces them to ashes." The Jacobins loudly applauded him.

Fouché, who had remained at Lyons, wrote to Collot d'Herbois, to congratulate him on their mutual triumph. "And we also combat the enemies of the republic at Toulon by offering them the spectacle of the corpses of thousands of their accomplices. Let us crush at once, in our wrath, all the rebels, all the conspirators, all the traitors. Let us exercise justice after the example of nature, and avenge ourselves like a great nation. Let us strike with the force of the thunderbolt, and let the very ashes of our foes disappear for ever from the soil of freedom. Let the republic be a vast volcano. Adieu, my friend; tears of joy gush from my eyes, and inundate my soul. We have but one manner of celebrating our victory. This evening we shall send two hundred and thirteen rebels to meet their doom beneath the fire of our cannon."

Even at Lyons, however, a few men dared to breathe sentiments of humanity, to condemn crime, and accuse the executioners; and some of the citizens ventured to address Robespierre as the moderator of the republic, for it was known from the correspondence of Couthon with some of the principal patriots of Lyons, that Robespierre was indignant at the proscriptions of Fouché and Collot d'Herbois, and the destruction of the second city of France. "These Marius's of the theatre," said he to Duplay, alluding to the former profession of the proconsul, "will soon reign over nought save ruins." Fouché in his letters to Duplay, strove to circumvent Robespierre, and represented Lyons as a perpetual scene of counter-revolution. Some few republicans met in secret at Lyons, awaiting a turn in the tide of popular opinion; and one of them, named Gillet, ventured to address Robespierre. "Citoyen representant," the letter began, "I have inhabited caves and vaults, I have suffered hunger and thirst, during the siege of my native place, and in a few days more I should have fallen a victim to my attachment to the Convention, which, in my eyes is the rallying point of all good citizens. I have then a right to speak of justice and moderation towards my enemies, and those who assail the freedom of religious opinions are now the really guilty persons. Hasten, citoyen, to obtain a decree, which, by condemning them to death, may purge the land of liberty. The evil is great, the ulcer deep, and it must be cut out by a bold and determined hand. Our country is panic-struck; the labourer sows with the conviction that he shall not reap; the wealthy hide their riches, and dare not furnish the indigent with the means of procuring a subsistence. All commerce is suspended; and women, stifling the instincts of nature, curse the day when they became mothers. The dying man summons his pastor, that he may hear from his lips words of consolation and hope, and the priest is threatened with the guillotine if he consoles his brother. The churches are pillaged, the altars destroyed by *brigands*, who affect to act in the name of the law, but who really obey the order of greater wretches than themselves. Good God, at what a period have we arrived! All good citizens, or almost all, blessed the Revolution; and now, all curse it, and moan the reign of tyranny. The crisis is such, that we are on the eve of still greater misfortunes; and the fragments of the bombs fired against this city may perchance destroy the whole Convention if you do not hasten to quench it. Meditate, Robespierre, on these truths, to which I dare affix my name, even though I perish for having written them."

XVII. These appeals from the purer republicans were stifled at Paris, by the mad clamours of the partisans of Hébert, Chaumette, and Collot d'Herbois. Robespierre, Collot, and Saint-Just, who did not as yet venture to attack them, remained silent, until public indignation was sufficiently aroused, to direct it against the terrorists. But whilst the smoking ruins of Lyons were quenched in rivers of blood, the torch of civil war was kindled at Toulon.

Toulon, the most important port of the republic, had passed rapidly from the excess of Jacobinism, to disgust and abhorrence of the Revolution. Imitating the movements of Marseilles previous to the 10th of August, Toulon had sent the *élite* of her youth and the dregs of her population to Paris. Provence had despatched a portion of its flame to Paris; but the same ardour that rendered it so terrible to the throne of Louis XVI., remained incapable of long supporting a central and uniform republic like that which Robespierre, Danton, the Cordeliers, and Jacobins wished to found. These ancient Grecian and Phœnicians have imbibed something of the perpetual agitation and insubordination of the sea. The spectacle of the ocean always renders man more free and impatient of restraint, for he constantly beholds the image of liberty in its waves, and his soul imbibes the independence of the element. The presence of the naval officers, almost all of whom were royalists, the influence of the priests, the outrages and insults offered by the Jacobins to religion, the indignation caused by the excesses the army of Carteaux had committed at Marseilles, and every thing urged Toulon on to an insurrection.

XVIII. The English fleet under Admiral Hood, which was cruizing in the Mediterranean, learnt all these particulars by secret correspondence with the royalists of Toulon. This fleet consisted of six vessels of the line and twenty-five frigates. Admiral Hood presented himself to the Toulonese as an ally and liberator, rather than as an enemy. He promised to guard the city, the harbour, and the fleet, not as a conquest, but as a deposit which he would hand over to Louis XVI.'s successor, as soon as France should have repressed her interior tyrants. The opinion of the Toulonese passed with the rapidity of the wind, from Jacobinism to federalism,—from federalism to royalism,—from royalism to defection. Ten thousand fugitives of Marseilles driven into Toulon by the terrors of the vengeance of the republic,—the shelter of the walls, the batteries of the vessels, the combined English and Spanish fleets, ready to protect the insurrection, gave to the Toulonese the idea of this crime against their country.

Of the two admirals who commanded the French fleet in the port of Toulon, one, Admiral Trogoff, conspired with the royalists; the other, Admiral Saint Julien, endeavoured to maintain the republicanism of his crews. Thus divided in feeling, the fleet was neutralised by opposite tendencies. It could only follow, by being itself torn by contrary factions, the movement given to it by the conquering party. Placed between an insurgent city and a blockaded sea, it must be inevitably crushed either by the cannon of the fortress, the guns of the English, or by both fires at once. The population of Toulon, when so many opposing elements combined at once, rose at the arrival of the advanced guard of Carteaux, with an unanimity which shut out every idea of remorse. They closed the Jacobin clubs, destroyed their president, imprisoned the representatives of the people Bayle and Beauvais, sent within their walls, and called in the English, Spanish, and Neapolitans.

At the sight of the enemy's squadrons Beauvais committed suicide in his prison. The French fleet, with the exception of a few vessels which the Admiral Saint Julien still kept for some days to their duty, hoisted the white flag. The Toulonese, English, and Neapolitans united, to the number of 15,000 men, armed the forts and approaches to the city, against the troops of the republic. Carteaux, advancing from Marseilles, at the head of 4000 men, drove back the enemy's advanced guard from the gorges of Ollioules. General Lapoype, detached from the army of Nice with 7000 men, invested Toulon on the opposite side. The representatives of the people, Fréron, Barras, Albitte, Salicetti, watched, directed, and fought at the same time. The small number of republicans, the immense space they had to occupy to invest the mountains which back Toulon, the site and fire of the forts which protect the heights of this amphitheatre, and the inexperience of the generals, for a long time made the attacks unavailing, and made the Convention tremble at this example of unpunished treason. As soon as Lyons allowed the troops at the disposal of the Committee of Public Safety to be at liberty, Carnot hastened to direct them against Toulon, sending thither General Doppet the conqueror, and Fouché the exterminator of Lyons. Fouché, as well as his colleagues Fréron and Barras, had resolved on the destruction of Toulon, even if in doing so they annihilated the French marine and arsenals.

A captain of artillery, sent by Carnot to the army of the Alps, was stopped on his way, to replace the commandant of artillery, Donmartin, who had been wounded, at the army of Toulon. This young man was Napoleon Bonaparte. His fortune awaited him there. His fellow-countryman Salicetti presented him to Carteaux. In a few words and in a few days he displayed his genius, and was the soul of all operations. Predestined to make force surmount opinion, and the army superior to the people, he was first seen in the smoke of a battery, striking with the same blow anarchy in Toulon, and his enemies in the roadstead. His future was in this position: a military genius bursting forth in the fire of a civil war, to seize on the soldier, illustrate the sword, stifle the utterance of opinion, quench the Revolution, and compel liberty to retrograde for a century! Glory, vast but deplorable, which posterity will not judge like his contemporaries!

XIX. Dugommier had replaced Carteaux. He called a council of war, at which Bonaparte was present. This young captain, instantly promoted to the rank of a *chef de bataillon*, reorganised the artillery, moved the batteries nearer to the city, discovered the heart of the position, directed all his blows thither, and neglecting all else, went right forward. The English general O'Hara, leaving Fort Malbosquet with six thousand men, fell into a snare laid for him by Bonaparte, was wounded and taken prisoner. Fort Malbosquet, which commands the roadstead, was attacked by two columns in spite of the orders of the representatives. Bonaparte and Dugommier were the first who entered the breach—their victory was their justification. "General," said Bonaparte to Dugommier, broken down by fatigue and age, "go and sleep, we have just taken Toulon." Admiral Hood saw at daybreak the French batteries bristling over the embrasures and ready to sweep the roadstead. The winds of autumn were blowing a gale, the sea ran high, the sky was lowering—all betokened that the coming storms of winter would prevent the English from getting away from the roadstead.

At the close of day the enemy's boats towed the fire-ship *Vulcan* into the centre of the French fleet. Immense quantities of combustibles were piled up in the magazines, dockyards, and arsenals. Some English, with a lighted match in their hands, awaited the signal for firing. The clock of the port struck ten o'clock,—a rocket was let off from the centre of the city, which rose and then fell in sparks. This was the signal, and the match was applied to the train of powder. The arsenal, the storehouses, ship timber, pitch and tar, flax, the ships' stores, of the fleet and this naval depôt, were all destroyed in a few hours. This blaze, which engulphed half the marine of France, for a whole night lighted up the waves of the Mediterranean, the sides of the mountains, the camps of the representatives, and the decks of the English vessels. The inhabitants of Toulon, abandoned for some hours to the vengeance of the republicans, wandered about the quais. The silence which the horror of fire cast over the two camps was only interrupted by the explosion of the powder magazines, of sixteen vessels, and twenty frigates, whose decks and guns were projected into the air before they were swallowed up by the waves. The report of the departure of the combined squadrons, and the surrender of the city, had already spread among the populace. Fifteen thousand Toulonese and Marseillais refugees, men, women, children, old people, wounded, infirm, had left their abodes, and hastened to the beach, where they struggled for places in the boats which would take them on board the English, Spanish, and Neapolitan vessels. The raging sea and the fire swept between the waves rendered the conveyance of fugitives more dangerous and slow. Every instant the cries from a boat that sunk, and the dead bodies flung ashore, disheartened the sailors. The burning fragments of the arsenal and the fleet rained down upon this multitude, and struck numbers to the earth. A battery of the republican army was firing shot and shell at the port and quay. Wives lost their husbands, daughters their mothers, mothers their children, in the confusion. Touching and terrible dramas were buried beneath the horrors of that night. It recalled the ancient generations of Asia Minor or Greece, abandoning *en masse* the land of their birth, and bearing away upon the seas their riches and their gods, by the flames of a city in conflagration. About seven thousand inhabitants of Toulon, exclusive of the officers and seamen, found shelter on board the English and Spanish vessels. The crime of having delivered over the stores and arms of France to the foe, and of having hoisted the flag of royalty, was not to be forgiven. They uttered from the crests of the waves a last adieu to the hills of Provence, lighted up by the flames which consumed their roofs and olive trees. At this awful moment the explosion of two frigates, containing several thousand barrels of gunpowder, which the Spaniards had neglected to throw overboard, burst like a volcano over the city and sea, a fearful farewell of civil war, which rained down its fiery fragments alike on the conquerors and the conquered.

The English weighed anchor, carrying off the vessels they had not destroyed by fire, and put to sea. The refugees of Toulon were nearly all conveyed to Leghorn, and established themselves at Tuscany. Their families still dwell there, and we hear French names of that period amongst the foreign appellations on the hills of Leghorn, Florence, and Pisa.

XX. Next day, 20th December, 1793, the representatives entered Toulon at the head of the republican army. Dugommier, pointing to the city in ashes, and the houses nearly empty of inhabitants, entreated the conventionalists to content themselves with this vengeance, and to suppose generously that all the guilty had gone into exile, and thus spare the rest. The representatives despised the magnanimity of the aged general, — their office was not only to vanquish, but to terrify. The guillotine entered Toulon with the artillery of the army, and blood flowed as it had at Lyons. Fouché urged on the punishments. The Convention, by a decree, struck out the name of the city of traitors. "Let the shell and mine," said Barrère, "crush every roof and merchant in Toulon; let there remain only in their place a military post, peopled by the defenders of the Republic."

# BOOK LI.

I. The contests between the republic and her enemies, sometimes heroic and sometimes brutal, alternating between the battle-field and the scaffold, had in no manner interrupted the sacrifice of human life either in Paris or the provinces. Since the death of the Girondists the guillotine appeared to have risen in public estimation. It unceasingly devoured victims taken indiscriminately from all those different parties — the parties the Revolution had encountered either in its past or onward course. Some sanguinary demagogues of the Commune, in conjunction with la Montagne, demanded that the instrument of death should be constructed of hewn stone, and erected in the Place de la Concorde, opposite the Tuileries. According to their ideas, the guillotine should be considered as a public national building, capable of explaining to all and for ever, that the surveillance of the people was as lasting as its vengeance was unceasing. The Revolutionary Tribunal, attentive to the slightest hint from the Committee of Public Safety, lost not a moment in sending all those to perish on a scaffold whose names were given to them. A trial was but a mockery of justice, a mere farce.

It was impossible that the name of Madame Roland should long escape the resentment of the people. That name alone comprised an entire party. The soul of the Gironde, this woman might one day prove a very Nemesis, if permitted to survive those illustrious individuals who had preceded her to the grave.

Among such of the Girondists as survived, it was deemed necessary to strike terror, by destroying their idol — while the memory of the dead was degraded by its association with the popular execration excited by a female odious to the people, and a supposed foe to liberty. Such were the motives which induced the Commune and Jacobins to demand that Madame Roland should be brought to trial.

II. The Committee of Public Safety, the ever-ready, (though sometimes pained) executor of the wishes of the populace, inscribed the name of Madame Roland on a list presented every evening to Fouquier-Tinville, and which Robespierre signed with visible disquietude. During the early part of his abode in Paris, the deputy of Arras, then but little known, had been a constant visitor at Madame Roland's house. And when the Constituent Assembly wounded the pride, and disdained the words of Robespierre, Madame Roland discerned his genius, honoured his pertinacity, and encouraged his despised eloquence. The recollection of this glanced across the mind of Robespierre, as he signed an order for appearing before a tribunal, which he well knew was the same thing as signing a death-warrant. Madame Roland and Robespierre had commenced their revolutionary career together, and by the workings of that same revolution, the one had attained unlimited power, while the other had been precipitated into the very depths of adversity, and it was in all probability, from the encouragement bestowed on his abilities by Madame Roland, that Robespierre owed the elevated position he now occupied, and the power it gave him of decreeing life or death to his early friend. Any other man than Robespierre would have felt the influence of these reminiscences, and a feeling of generous pity steal over his mind; but Robespierre was a mere stoic, who mistook inflexibility for strength of character, and obstinacy for firmness; he would have plucked out his own heart had he believed it capable of counselling the slightest weakness. Calculation had superseded all natural feelings in his mind, and the more he stifled every sentiment of humanity the nearer did he in his own imagination approach superhuman greatness, and the more he endured from the struggle the more persuaded was he of its justice. He had in fact arrived at that excess of sophistry and false sentiment that makes a man mistrust every virtuous impulse of his heart.

On the 31st May, Madame Roland was committed to the prison of l'Abbaye. It is the lot of some individuals to attract a greater degree of interest and curiosity on the part of posterity than the records of an empire, for such persons have united in their situation and feelings — their alternate rise and fall — all the vicissitudes, catastrophes, glories, and misfortunes of the time in which they lived. Madame Roland was one of this class. Her enthusiasm and passion, her illusions, her martyrdom, her unextinguishable hope for the future, amid the actual discouragement of the present, rendered her, even in the very depths of her dungeon, a living personification of the whole Revolution.

Separated from the world, torn from her father, husband, and child, she bathed in floods of inward tears the ardours of an imagination, whose fires, though smouldering, were not extinct.

III. The gaolers of the Abbaye sought by every means a prison afforded, to soften the captivity of Madame Roland. Some beings can only be persecuted from a distance — beauty subdues and disarms all who approach it.

Unknown to the commissioners, Madame Roland was placed in a chamber into which a ray of light could find entrance. She was even indulged with flowers, of which she was so passionately fond; in the days of her happiness it had been her delight to surround herself with these lovely productions of nature, and she had ever esteemed them among her choicest delights. Climbing and leafy plants were twined around the iron bars of her window, in order that by concealing the thick grating the prisoner might dream she was free. A few of her particular friends were allowed to visit and converse with her. Books were supplied, and thus she was enabled to pursue her favourite studies, and hold converse with the illustrious characters of antiquity.

Tranquil respecting the fate of her husband, whom she was aware had found refuge with faithful friends at Rouen; fully satisfied as to her daughter's safety, from the knowledge of her having been consigned by her friend Bosc, administrator of the Jardin des Plantes, to the care of Madame Creuzé de la Touche, her adopted mother; proud to suffer for liberty, happy to undergo any suffering for her friends, Madame Roland felt a soft calm steal over her, even amid the horrors of a dungeon. Nature has ordained that every excess of misfortune shall be followed by a sort of lull, in the same manner as a soft couch, placed at the bottom of an abyss, might be supposed to diminish the suffering of such as were unlucky to fall into it.

The certainty of having arrived at the worst that can happen to us, — the unwillingness to believe that man will carry his vengeance any further, added to the inward consciousness of courage to bear all, — raises the prisoner far above his executioner. The union of these three sentiments sustained the energy of Madame Roland, and made the contemplation of her sufferings glorious in her sight, creating a drama of which she was at once the subject, the heroine, and the audience.

She separated herself in thought from the world, time, and herself, and desired to anticipate her place in posterity. No modern feelings or Christian sentiments taught her to bow with resignation to her lot, and to look to Heaven for help; her intense abhorrence of superstition had destroyed in her the belief of a present Deity, or a sure immortality. A heathen in the midst of a Christian country, her virtue partook of the same character as her opinions; her Providence consisted in the opinion of men, her heaven in that of posterity. The only God she invoked was the future: a species of abstract and stoical duty, itself its own judge and reward, supplied the place, with her, of hope, consolation, or piety. But such was the strength as well as purity of her mind, that this virtue, without proof or recompence, sufficed to support her in all her adversity, and enabled her to face death without shrinking.

Deprived of the power of acting, she concentrated her powers of thought. Through the indulgence of her gaolers, she procured some sheets of paper, pens, and ink, and with these she commenced writing portions of both her public and private life, contriving each day to conceal one of these pages from the surveillance of her gaolers. These detached pages she confided to her friend Bosc, who carried them away concealed beneath his clothes, and kept them as a sacred deposit against better days; while it rejoiced Madame Roland to believe that she had thus preserved the records of at least one year of her life from perishing, and that she might hope to preserve from oblivion that which she esteemed by far the most valuable part of herself — her memory. In these papers are mingled, with a disorder and haste that seems to count only upon the present chance of communicating them, the most feminine thoughts and feelings of her childhood, and the gloomiest picture of her imprisonment. In the same book might be read the description of the young and ardent girl seated in her chamber on the Quai des Orfévres, dreaming of love, and aspiring after glory; then, by a rapid flight of the pen, the scene lays in the gloomy dungeon, where a poor captive sighs in the bitterness of heart over a separation from all she holds dear, and parting by degrees from every tender tie or hopeful illusion, sees nothing before her but the scaffold.

IV. This work, although addressed to posterity, bears evident marks of having been intended for some confidential, though unknown friend, to whom Madame Roland might, after her death, be enabled, through the medium of these pages, more perfectly to relate every thought, feeling, and reference to her past life—in fact, these memoirs resemble a conversation carried on in such an under tone, that only a part is generally heard or understood; but the interest they excite becomes so much the greater, when they are viewed as having been written at the very threshold of death—as the breathings of a noble mind ready to exhale its last sigh. At every word the reader trembles, lest the entrance of the executioner should arrest the progress of these outpourings of a wounded spirit; and it is almost possible to imagine the axe suspended over the writer's head, ready to make her pen and her life cease together.

These occupations softened the captivity of Madame Roland; and by affording a vent for her feelings, alleviated the sorrow she endured. Words may be made a means of revenge, and the indignation that can relieve itself by their means, is lightened of part of its load. There were times when the captive ventured to listen to the whispers of hope—she was even indulged with a few hours liberty from her prison. Frantic with joy she flew to her house, to embrace her child, and behold, once more, that home, once so blest, and always so loved: but this temporary freedom was merely a cruel snare on the part of her oppressors; and the satellites of the Commune watched her steps, and dashed the cup of happiness away ere it had reached her lips. They waited for her on the steps of her dwelling—barring her approach, nor suffering her to cross its threshold, to press her child to her heart, or to witness the grief and devotion of her attached servants—she was seized by these emissaries, and, spite of her tears and supplications, conveyed, ere she had scarcely quitted one prison, into another; that of St. Pélagie, the receptacle for all the lost and abandoned females swept from the streets of Paris; — thus offering a fresh humiliation, by compelling their victim to associate with beings from whom she shrunk in abhorrence; and while her modesty revolted at their gross conduct, she was constrained to see and hear actions and language that shocked alike her eyes and ears. She had resigned herself to die, but infamy and disgrace had been adjudged her instead.

By the compassionate sympathy of her gaolers she was, at length, removed from this degrading companionship; she was placed in a chamber by herself, and furnished with a flock bed and a table. Once more she set about her memoirs, and again enjoyed the pleasure of seeing her friends, Bosc and Champagneux. The cowardly Lanthenas, the assiduous frequenter of her family circle, during her days of power, with the ungrateful Pache, who owed his present exalted position to herself and husband, feigned to look down from their summit of greatness, the one as leader of the Commune, the other of La Montagne, and to have forgotten that such a person as herself existed. Danton willingly turned his eyes from beholding her miseries, while Robespierre would not venture to deprive the people of a single victim. Still the recollection of the old friendship that had once existed between him and Madame Roland, inspired in the breast of the poor captive a momentary glimmer of hope, and almost of weakness. She was lying ill in the infirmary of the prison, and a physician, styling himself the friend of Robespierre, attended her. He mentioned Robespierre's name to her.—"I knew him well, and esteemed him greatly," replied she; "I believed him an ardent and sincere friend of liberty, but I now fear that he cares for nothing but revenge and power; I considered him easily prejudiced, or moved to passion; reluctant to reconsider his decisions, and but too prone to judge all guilty who do not entertain the same opinions as himself. I saw much of him. Ask him to lay his hand on his heart, and say whether he entertains a bad opinion of me." This conversation suggested to her the idea of writing to Robespierre; yielding to the impulse, she addressed him as follows.

V. "Robespierre," wrote Madame Roland, in a letter at once pathetic and provoking, "I am about to put you to the proof, and to repeat to you what I said respecting your character to the friend who has undertaken to deliver this letter. You may be very sure it is no suppliant who addresses you. I never asked a favour yet of any human being, and it is not from the depths of a prison I would supplicate him who could, if he pleased, restore me to liberty. No; prayers and entreaties belong to the guilty or to slaves. Neither would murmurs or complaints accord with my nature. I know how to bear all; I also well know that at the beginning of every republic, the revolutions which effected them have invariably selected the principal actors in the change as their victims — it is their fate to experience this, as it becomes the task of the historian to avenge their memories — still I am at a loss to imagine how I, a mere woman, should be exposed to the fury of a storm, ordinarily suffered to expend itself upon the great leaders of a revolution. You, Robespierre, were well acquainted with my husband, and I defy you to say you ever thought him other than an honourable man; he had all the roughness of virtue, even as Cato possessed its asperity. Disgusted with business; irritated by persecution; weary of the world, and worn out with years and exertions, he desired only to bury himself and his troubles in some unknown spot, and to conceal himself there to save the age he lived in from the commission of a crime. My pretended confederacy would be amusing were it not too serious a matter for a jest. Whence then arises that degree of animosity manifested towards me who never injured a creature in my life, and cannot find it in my heart to wish evil even to those who injure and oppress me? Brought up in solitude, my mind directed to serious studies, of simple tastes, an enthusiastic admirer of the Revolution — excluded by my sex from any participation in public affairs, yet taking delight in conversing of them,—I despised the first calumnies circulated respecting me, attributing them to the envy felt by the ignorant and low-minded, at what they were pleased to style my elevated position, but to which I infinitely preferred the peaceful obscurity in which I had passed so many happy days.

"Yet I have now been for five months the inhabitant of a prison,—torn from my beloved child, whose innocent head may never more be pillowed on a mother's breast,—far from all I hold dear; the mark for the invectives of a mistaken people; constrained to hear the very sentinels as they keep watch beneath my windows discussing the subject of my approaching execution, and outraged by reading the violent and disgusting diatribes poured forth against me by hirelings of the press, who have never once beheld me. I have wearied no one with requests, petitions, or demands; on the contrary, I feel proudly equal to battle alone with my ill fortune, and it may be to trample it under my feet.

"Robespierre! I send not this softened picture of my condition to excite your pity. No; such sentiment expressed by you would not only offend me, but be rejected, as it deserves. I write for your edification. Fortune is fickle — popular favour equally so. Look at the fate of those who led on the revolutions of former ages — the idols of the people, and afterwards their governors — from Vitellius to Cæsar, or from Hippo, the orator of Syracuse, down to our Parisian speakers. Sylla and Marius proscribed thousands of knights and senators, besides a vast number of other unfortunate beings; but were they able to prevent history from handing down their names to the just execration of posterity, and did they themselves enjoy happiness? Whatever may be the fate awarded me, I shall know how to submit to it in a manner worthy of myself, or to anticipate it, should I deem it advisable. After receiving the honours of persecution, am I to expect the still greater one of martyrdom? — Speak! It is something to know your fate, and a spirit such as mine can boldly face it be it what it may.

"Should you bestow a fair and impartial perusal of my letter, it will neither be useless to you nor my country. But, under any circumstances, this I say, Robespierre — and you cannot deny the truth of my assertion — none who have ever known me can persecute me without a feeling of remorse."

VI. Beneath the apparent stoicism of this letter there might, nevertheless, be traced a half-smothered appeal to mercy. Madame Roland had at least by writing it opened the door for a reconciliation, and a favourable reply on the part of Robespierre would have demanded her gratitude towards a man who persecuted and condemned to death the dearest objects of her life. She felt it would be sweeter to die than to owe her life to Robespierre, and under this impression she tore her letter in pieces.

The fragments of this epistle were, however, collected and preserved by Madame Roland, in remembrance of her having sacrificed all desire of personal safety to her dignity as female leader of a party, and her duty and affection as a wife, a mother, and a friend. Robespierre was spared all struggle between compunction and popularity: the prisoner resigned herself to her fate; she amused her leisure hours, as one is apt to do at the close of a day's employment, in music, conversation, and reading; with the former she calmed the sadness of her feelings, from her books she drew strength to support her situation. Her favourite author was Tacitus, that sublime anatomist, who points to the bodies of so many victims, and shows the various pulsations of grief and heroism. She went over his descriptions of public execution again and again, that she might know them by heart, and be enabled to imitate them worthily at her own last closing scene. At first she resolved to anticipate her fate, and obtained some poison; before swallowing it, she sat down to write to her husband, to excuse herself for having died before him. "Forgive me, my esteemed and justly honoured husband," wrote she, "for taking upon myself to dispose of a life I had consecrated to you; believe me, I could have loved it and you the better for your misfortunes had I but been permitted to have shared them with you. At present you are merely freed from a useless object of unavailing anguish to you." Then reverting to the recollection of her child, she says, "Pardon me, my beloved child, my sweet daughter, whose gentle image dwells within my heart, and whose very remembrance shakes my sternest resolution. Never would your fond mother have left you helpless in the world, could she but have remained to guide and guard you. Alas! alas! the cruel hearts that tore me from you cared little for innocence like yours." Then apostrophising her friends, she adds, "And you, my cherished friends, transfer to my motherless child the affection you have ever manifested for me. Grieve not at a resolution which ends my many and severe trials. You know me too well to believe that weakness or terror have instigated the step I am about to take. If I could be assured that when before that tribunal where so many just persons are sent I should be permitted to point out the tyrants, I would fain be standing there this instant."

A vague and solitary prayer at this moment escaped her lips: it was religion's last sigh that, ignorant where it would be breathed out, seemed desirous of exhaling itself in a higher and purer air than could be found in the dark future of an atheist's life. "Divinity! Supreme Being! Spirit of the universe! great principle of all that I feel great, or good, or immortal within myself, whose existence I believe in, because I must have emanated from something superior to that by which I am surrounded, — I am about to re-unite myself to thy essence."

She next made her will, distributing between her daughter, her friends, and servants, her piano, her harp, two favourite rings she still possessed, her books, and a few articles of furniture she had been permitted to place in her dungeon. She recalled her early love of nature, of the country, the sky. "Farewell!" wrote she; "farewell, glorious sun, that never failed to gild my windows with thy golden rays ere thou hiddest thy brightness in the heavens. Adieu, ye lonely banks of the Saône, whose wild beauty could fill my heart with such deep delight; and you too, poor, but honest people of Thizy, whose labours I lightened, whose distress I relieved, and whose sick beds I tended. Adieu — and farewell also those peaceful chambers, where I learned to love virtue and truth, where my imagination found in books and study the food to delight it, and where I learnt in silence and meditation to command my passions, and to despise my vanity. Again, farewell, my child; remember your mother. Doubtless your fate will be less severe than hers. Adieu, beloved child, whom I nourished at my breast, and earnestly desired to imbue with every feeling and opinion I myself entertained."

This last reflection overcame the stern resolution of the unfortunate mother; the image of her child, in all its smiling innocence, rose before her, and made her still cling to life. She threw away the poison, and determined, for her daughter's sake, to endure her sufferings to the end, and to await till summoned to die.

VII. The execution of the Girondists covered life with a funeral pall, in the estimation of Madame Roland. Vergniaud and Brissot were dead. Who could tell the fate of Buzot, Barbaroux, or Louvet? they, in all probability, had also ceased to exist.

She was removed to the Conciergerie. There, instead of losing strength or courage, it appeared as though both were increased. As she approached her end, her mind, her language, and her features seemed to take the impress of one appointed to fulfil some great and lofty destiny. During the few days she passed in the Conciergerie, she spread, by her presence among the numerous prisoners there, an enthusiasm and contempt of death that elevated even the most abject and depressed. The approach to the scaffold seems to give a more divine character to her beauty: the length of her captivity, — the calm consciousness with which she recognised the entire hopelessness of her situation, — her voice tremulous with the emotion she forbade to vent itself in tears — gave to her words that thrilling interest that finds its way to every heart. She conversed at the grate with the numerous members of her party, who, like herself, had found their way to the Conciergerie. Standing on a stone bench, which elevated a little above the ground, and clasping her fingers round the iron bars that separated the opening between the cloister and the court, she found her tribune in her prison, and her audience in her companions to the scaffold. She spoke long and eloquently of Vergniaud; but her discourse was mixed with that angry and bitter spirit a woman is prone to introduce into her arguments. Her vindictive memory plunged into the remotest records of antiquity, to find likenesses, analogies, and names capable of bearing a comparison with the tyrants of her day. While her enemies were preparing the formalities of her accusation, merely a few feet above where she stood, her voice, like that of posterity, reproached them from the very dungeons of the Conciergerie. She took her revenge while living, and dying bequeathed her eternal hatred. Her eloquence drew no tears from her audience: she would have been displeased at such a manifestation of weakness; but at each pause she made, loud cries of admiration burst from those who heard her. The prisoners would listen to her for hours, and when compelled to return to their cells, would depart, shouting enthusiastically, "*Vive la republique!*" No slander was uttered against liberty; on the contrary, it was worshipped even in the dungeons hollowed in its name. But this woman, so magnanimous and superior to her fate in public, gave way, like all of human kind, when left to the silence and solitude of her dungeon. Her heroic spirit seemed to leave her, and her woman's heart quailed with deep anguish as the veil of enthusiasm faded away, and stern reality assumed its place, showing her all the horrors of her situation; and the greater had been the excitement of her feelings and imagination, so was her mental and bodily prostration proportionately severe. She passed whole mornings at her window, her forehead pressed against the iron grating, gazing upon the small speck of the heavens visible to her, and shedding floods of tears over the flowers with which the concierge had decorated the place. With what were her thoughts occupied? The last broken sentences of her letter plainly show that every idea was centred in her child and her husband, — he who, fallen into years, must daily and hourly miss that tender care and watchfulness she had ever exercised towards him. She meditated probably upon the perverseness of her destiny, that gave her a heart so formed for love and tenderness, yet condemned her to forego their indulgence, and to throw herself into the very vortex of political ambition. She thought too of those dear friends whose image was ever present to her mind, for whose sake she would have wished to live did they still survive, or to follow them to the grave if they had preceded her there. On this subject she was wholly ignorant, and great was the distress it occasioned her.

To the other miseries of her captivity she appeared quite insensible. The damp, dark, unwholesome cell assigned to Madame Roland was, by a singular coincidence, next to that in which the queen had been lodged. Providence seemed to have permitted these two remarkable personages to be thus brought by different routes to the same dungeon, and thence to the same scaffold: the one had fallen from her high estate by the instrumentality of the other, who in her turn, after having been elevated to the first honours of the republic, was hurled from her pinnacle to lie prostrate by the side of her own victim. These retaliations may be ascribed to accident, but they bear a strong resemblance to an even-handed justice.

VIII. The examination and trial of Madame Roland was but a repetition of those charges against the Gironde with which every harangue of the Jacobin party was filled. She was reproached with being the wife of Roland, and the friend of his accomplices. With a proud look of triumph Madame Roland admitted her guilt in both instances, spoke with tenderness of her husband, of her friends with respect, and of herself with dignified modesty; but borne down by the clamours of the court whenever she gave vent to her indignation against her persecutors, she ceased speaking amid the threats and invectives of her auditors. The people were at that period permitted to take a fearful and leading part in the dialogue between the judges and accused; they even permitted to persons tried to address the court, or compelled their silence; the very verdict rested with them.

Madame Roland heard herself sentenced to death with the air of one who saw in her condemnation merely her title to immortality. She rose, and slightly bowing to her judges, said, with a bitter and ironical smile, "I thank you for considering me worthy to share the fate of the good and great men you have murdered!" She flew down the steps of the Conciergerie with the rapid swiftness of a child about to attain some long-desired object: the end and aim of her desires was death. As she passed along the corridor, where all the prisoners had assembled to greet her return, she looked at them smilingly, and drawing her right hand across her throat, made a sign expressive of cutting off a head. This was her only farewell; it was tragic as her destiny, — joyous as her deliverance; and well was it understood by those who saw it. Many who were incapable of weeping for their own fate shed tears of unfeigned sorrow for hers.

On that day a greater number than usual of carts laden with victims rolled onwards towards the scaffold. Madame Roland was placed in the last, beside a weak and infirm old man, named Lamarche, once director of the manufactory of Assignats. She wore a white robe, as a symbol of her innocence, of which she was anxious to convince the people; her magnificent hair, black and glossy as a raven's wing, fell in thick masses almost to her knees; her complexion, purified by her long captivity, and now glowing under the influence of a sharp frosty November day, bloomed with all the freshness of early youth. Her eyes were full of expression; her whole countenance seemed radiant with glory, while a movement between pity and contempt agitated her lips. A crowd followed them, uttering the coarsest threats and most revolting expressions. "To the guillotine! to the guillotine!" exclaimed the female part of the rabble. "I am going to the guillotine," replied Madame Roland: "a few moments and I shall be there; but those who send me thither will not be long ere they follow me. I go innocent, but they will come stained with blood, and you who applaud our execution will then applaud theirs with equal zeal." Sometimes she would turn away her head that she might not appear to hear the insults with which she was assailed, and lean with almost filial tenderness over the aged partner of her execution. The poor old man wept bitterly, and she kindly and cheeringly encouraged him to bear up with firmness, and to suffer with resignation. She even tried to enliven the dreary journey they were performing together by little attempts at cheerfulness, and at length succeeded in winning a smile from her fellow-sufferer.

A colossal statue of Liberty, composed of clay, like the liberty of the time, then stood in the middle of the Place de la Concorde, on the spot now occupied by the Obelisk; the scaffold was erected beside this statue. Upon arriving there Madame Roland descended from the cart in which she had rode. Just as the executioner had seized her arm to enable her to be the first to mount to the guillotine, she displayed one of those noble and tender considerations for others only a woman's heart could conceive, or put into practice at such a moment. "Stay!" said she, momentarily resisting the man's grasp. "I have one only favour to ask, and that is not for myself; I beseech you grant it me." Then turning to the old man, she said, "Do you precede me to the scaffold; to see my blood flow would be making you suffer the bitterness of death twice over. I must spare you the pain of witnessing my punishment." The executioner allowed this arrangement to be made.

What a proof this of a mind imbued with a sensibility so exquisite and delicate as to forget its own sufferings, to think only of saving one pang to an aged, an unknown old man! and how clearly does this one little trait attest the heroic calmness with which this celebrated woman met her death; this one closing act of her life should be sufficient to vindicate her character before both God and man.

After the execution of Lamarche, which she heard without changing colour, Madame Roland stepped lightly up to the scaffold, and bowing before the statue of Liberty, as though to do homage to a power for whom she was about to die, exclaimed, "O Liberty! Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!" She then resigned herself to the hands of the executioner, and in a few seconds her head fell into the basket placed to receive it.

IX. Thus perished a woman, whose earliest and fondest dream had been the Revolution, who had created in the mind of her aged partner a hatred for royalty resembling her own; who had communicated her feelings to a set of young, eloquent, and enthusiastic men, attached to antique theories, and who found in the lips and eyes of their goddess a species of endless adoration. The pure and involuntary affection with which her beauty and genius inspired them, was the magic circle that retained around *her* so many superior men, who were prevented, by various differences of opinion, from preserving the same bond of union when beyond her influence; they were spell-bound by her talents, and, highly imaginative themselves, placed their whole confidence in the imagination of their idol, who thus became their oracle as well.

She led them on till one after the other perished on the scaffold, where she followed them, and the spirit of the Gironde departed for ever, with the last breath exhaled from the lips of Madame Roland, who bore then the same resemblance to the republic she will ever preserve in the eyes of posterity: like it she was premature and ideal—beautiful to view, eloquent to listen to, but her footsteps were marked with the blood of her friends, and her head fell beneath the same sword that had immolated so many others in the sight of a people who no longer acknowledged her.

Her body, the idol of so many hearts, was thrown into the common fosse at Clamart.

X. The grief of M. Roland, when apprised of his wife's execution, knew no bounds—to live without her was impossible;

and without saying a word of his intention, he quitted the hospitable roof that had sheltered him for the last six months; through the greater part of the night he continued his flight, but with no fixed design, save that of removing to the greatest possible distance from his late asylum, so as to destroy all trace of himself, and to prevent his kind protectors from incurring any danger on his account. When morning dawned he beheld both heaven and earth with horror—he drew a long stiletto from the inside of his walking stick, and leaning the head of it against the trunk of an apple-tree growing by the side of the high road, threw himself upon the point of the weapon, which pierced his heart. Some shepherds, passing with their flocks, discovered his inanimate body lying beside a ditch; a paper pinned to the breast of his coat bore these words,—"Whoever thou art that findest these remains, respect them as those of a virtuous man. After my wife's death, I would not remain another day upon this earth so stained with crimes."

Thus did M. Roland mix up the confession of his own republicanism, his love for virtue, and his ardent affection for his wife, even in the epitaph he wrote for himself. Raised too high by the agitation of a civil tempest—supported by the borrowed genius of a woman in a position far above his natural level,—and intoxicated with the part he was called upon to play, he mistook probity for virtue, when it is, in reality, only the basis of it. Still he strove with all the courage of ancient days to preserve the republic from anarchy, and victims from perishing on the scaffold, and his reward was such a death as resembles a page torn from the records of antiquity—his end resembled that of both Cato and Seneca; like Cato he died for the liberty of his country—like Seneca he forfeited his life for the love of a woman, and a drop of tender affection appears to have bedewed the republican dagger with which he pierced his heart; this excess of love, combined with so much patriotism, invests the death of M. Roland with a mixture of romance and pathos; and if his death be the greatest act he ever committed, the individual who has hitherto appeared as an ordinary character, becomes a hero by that death; and M. Roland could scarcely be said to have lived in vain, either for glory or liberty, since his career was terminated in a manner worthy of antiquity.

## BOOK LII.

I. What, when Roland and his wife thus died, were their dearest friends Buzot, Barbaroux, Pétion, Louvet, Valady, Guadet, and Salles, whom we left quitting as fugitives in Gironde, doing? The commissaries of La Montagne, Ysabeau and Tallien, had preceded them to Bordeaux.

These representatives, curbing Jacobinism with energy, and spreading terror, had in a few days annihilated federalism, aroused the faubourgs of Bordeaux against the town, incarcerated the merchants, bestowed power on the people, inaugurated the guillotine, recruited the clubs, and turned their own country against the Girondists. The submission of Lyons, the extermination of Toulon, and the punishment of Vergniaud and his friends had appalled, and to appearance converted La Gironde to the unity of the republic. On no side was a more vehement patriotism affected. In no quarter was complicity with the proscribed representatives more dreaded. In no part was there more danger of being suspected. Terror was more vigilant in Bordeaux than elsewhere. Each hamlet of La Gironde had its committee of public safety, its revolutionary army, its denunciators, and its executioners.

II. Arrived at Bec-d'Ambès, Guadet had left his colleagues concealed in the house of his father-in-law. This asylum was precarious. Guadet had gone to prepare for them one more safe in the little town of St. Emilion, his native country. But even in St. Emilion he could only find a safe retreat for two. There were seven of them. The messenger who brought them this sorrowful news to Bec-d'Ambès found the fugitives already surrounded by the battalions sent from Bordeaux, barricaded in their dwellings, and armed with a few braces of pistols and a blunderbuss — arms only sufficient to avenge, but not to defend, themselves. Night covered their flight. They went towards St. Emilion: not as to a place of safety, but as to one of similar destruction. The satellites of Tallien, who forced open their house at Bec-d'Ambès some moments after their flight, wrote to the Convention that they had found their beds still warm.

Guadet's father, an old man, seventy-two years of age, generously opened his house to them.

The friends of his son appeared as other sons to him, for whose sake he would have blushed to spare the remnant of his days. Hardly were they sheltered for some hours in this suspected house, when the approach of fifty troopers, who had followed their march across the country, was announced. Tallien himself hunted them with the most disciplined blood-hounds of the Bordeaux police. The Girondist deputies had twice to disperse. Tallien placed Guadet's father under the surveillance of two armed men, charged to watch his movements, his speech, and his very looks. He confiscated the property of the son. He organised a club of terrorists in the very town where the Girondists had sheltered themselves from terror.

One woman alone devoted herself to save them: she was the sister-in-law of Guadet, Madame Bouquey.

Informed of her brother-in-law's danger, and that of his friends, she had journeyed from Paris, where she resided without alarm, to console men of whom the greater part were unknown, though some were very dear, to her. Pity, that weakness of woman, becomes strength in great events, and consoles revolutions by the heroism of devotion. Guadet, Barbaroux, Buzot, Pétion, Valady, Louvet, and Salles entered secretly in the night into a subterraneous refuge which Madame Bouquey had prepared for them. The depth of the ground was alone deep and silent enough to bury the Girondists alive. This retreat was a catacomb. It opened on one side upon a cavern thirty feet in depth; on the other upon a cellar of the house. No domiciliary visit could discover its entrance. One dread alone occupied the generous hostess of the Girondists, — it was that of being imprisoned herself. What would become of her guests buried in this sepulchre, the veil of which she alone could open! She dreaded also to betray them by the purchase of the provision necessary for so many mouths. Dearth pervaded the markets. Bread was distributed only in proportion to the number of the inhabitants of a house, and under the orders of the municipality. Madame Bouquey could only claim a pound of bread per day. She deprived herself to divide this morsel amongst the proscribed eight. Vegetables, dried fruit, some poultry stealthily purchased, composed the nourishment of these men, who dissembled their hunger. Gaiety, however, that bitter salt of misfortune, reigned in these repasts of the Spartans.

When the search was relaxed, Madame Bouquey released her friends from the cavern. She made them sit at her table, breathe the fresh air, and see the heavens at night. She had procured them paper and books. Barbaroux wrote his memoirs; Buzot his defence. Louvet marked his recitals with the light pen with which he had written his romances; himself the hero of his own adventure. Pétion also wrote, but with a more severe hand. The mysteries of his popularity, so unworthily acquired and so courageously abdicated, were revealed under his pen. This confidence, doubtless, explained this man, small in power, great in adversity.

On the 12th of November, the day on which Madame Roland died in Paris, a low, vague rumour of the presence of the Girondists at Madame Bouquey was spread through St. Emilion. They were obliged to disperse themselves by groups into other asylums. The separation resembled a last adieu. None knew where he was going. Valady alone took the route of the Pyrenees. Death awaited him there. He marched blindly on to his fate. Barbaroux, Pétion, and Buzot, linking their life and death in an indissoluble friendship, bent their steps across the fields on the coast of the lands of Bordeaux, hoping that their track might in this desert be concealed. Guadet, Salles, and Louvet passed this first day in a quarry. A friend of Guadet's was to come, to take them at the close of day, and conduct them six leagues thence to the house of a rich lady whose cause Guadet had once pleaded, and whose fortune he had saved. The friend wanted courage and came not. Guadet and his friends set out alone, and depending on chance. The cold, the snow, and the rain, froze their badly covered limbs. Arrived at length, at four in the morning, at his client's gate, Guadet knocked, named himself, and was repulsed. He returned in despair to his friends. He found Louvet had fainted from hunger and cold at the foot of a tree. Guadet returned to the house, and in vain implored, first, a bed, then fire, and afterwards a glass of wine, for an expiring friend. Ingratitude allowed him to lament and die without an answer. Guadet again returned. His care, and that of Salles, restored Louvet, who then took the desperate resolution which saved him.

Followed by the image of his mistress, whom he had left in Paris, he decided to see her again, or to perish in the attempt. He embraced Salles and Guadet, divided with them some assignats which he had left, and departed alone, upon the route to Paris.

III. Guadet, Salles, Pétion, Barbaroux, and Buzot found themselves on the following night at St. Emilion, again united by the care of their benefactress, in the house of a poor but honest mechanic.

It was there they heard the tragical end of Vergniaud and their friends. They calculated stoically how many blows remained still to be struck by the guillotine in order that all the Girondists should fall. Their soul was elevated to the scaffold. But when it was announced to them some days afterwards that Madame Roland had suffered, their souls melted, and they wept. Buzot drew forth his knife to strike himself. He was seized with a long attack of delirium, during which he allowed cries to escape him which revealed all the secret and suffering of his heart. His friends wrested the weapon from his hands, allayed his fever, and made him swear to support existence for her sake, who had so nobly borne death. Buzot fell from that day into a state of melancholy and silence, which was only interrupted by sighs and inarticulate invocations. The recoil of the axe which had decapitated Madame Roland bruised no soul so deeply as that of Buzot. Death had not altogether broken, but it had opened the seal of, his heart.

The proscribed five breathed yet for some weeks in this new asylum. The oscillations of the Committee of Public Safety made the Convention lean sometimes to the side of indulgence, at others to that of terror, at Bordeaux. Executions were constant. Grangeneuve and Biroteau had just fallen; but victims were less sought for. The faithful Troquart, the host of the refugees at St. Emilion, flattered them with some hope of mitigation. This calm was transient. Commissioners, still more implacable, sent from Paris, revived the thirst of vengeance which had drawn breath in

La Gironde. The majority of these commissioners were young Cordeliers and Jacobins of Paris, still beardless, whom Hébert's party let loose upon Nantes, Troyes, and Bordeaux, to excite them to blood. Their youth excused their names. They revived punishments, and sent to the Convention bulletins of the guillotine, comparable to those of Collot d'Herbois at Lyons, of Fouché at Toulon, and Maignet at Marseilles. The arrival of these proconsuls suppressed all pity in the soul, and deprived the proscribed of all asylum.

They sent from Bordeaux to Saint Emilion detachments of the revolutionary army, directed by a police spy named Marion, who had trained dogs to track the Federalists. The republic thus imitated those men-hunts which the Spaniards had practised in the forests of America. Marion believed that the Girondists were hidden in the quarries of Saint Emilion. He arrived at night, without being expected, with his troops. He silently surrounded the house of the father, the friends, and relations of Guadet, and let loose his dogs in the caverns, as upon the track of wild beasts. He smoked the entrance of some grottoes. The dogs returned without their prey.

Another hunter, however, of Tallien's, named Favereau, penetrated with his satellites the dwelling of Guadet's father. These men had vainly searched the house through, and were already retracing the empty corridors, when one of the *gens d'armes*, who had remained behind, thought he perceived that the inner garret was smaller than the exterior walls of the house. He recalled his companions. They sounded the walls with the butt-end of their muskets. They applied their ears to them. The noise of the cocking of a pistol was heard. It was Guadet, who, finding himself discovered, loaded his pistol, to kill or to avenge himself. At this sound the *gens d'armes* summoned the proscribed to surrender themselves. The wall crumbled to pieces. Guadet and Salles broke it in coming out. They were drawn forth, chained, and conducted in triumph to Bordeaux. They were both beyond the law. Judgment was superfluous. Their names constituted their crime and their arrest. Salles, condemned to die on that very day, requested the means of writing to his wife and children. His soul poured itself forth in adieus so touching that history has preserved them.

"When you receive this letter," wrote Salles to his wife, "I shall only live in the memory of those who love me. What a charge I leave to you! Three children, and nothing to bring them up upon. However, console yourself, I shall not have died without having bewailed you, without having hoped in your courage; and it forms one of my consolations to think that you will gladly live on account of your innocent family. My love, I know your sensibility, and I love to believe that you shed bitter tears to the memory of the man who desired to render you happy, and whose principal pleasure consisted in the education of his two sons and beloved daughter. But will you neglect to dream that your second consideration belongs to them? They are deprived of a father; and they can, at least, by their innocent caresses, fill up the void of those which I can no more lavish on you. Charlotte! I have done every thing to preserve my life. I thought to devote myself to you, and, above all, to my country. It appeared to me that the eyes of the people were fascinated by the sentiments of your unhappy husband, — that they would one day open them, and would learn from me how dear their interests are to me. I thought I ought also to live to collect, on account of my friends, all the monuments I thought useful to their memory. Lastly, I ought to live for you, for my family, and for my children. Heaven disposes otherwise. I die calmly. I promised in my declaration, after the events of the 31st of May, that I should know how to die at the foot of the scaffold! I believe I can affirm that I shall keep my promise. My love, bewail me not. Death, as it appears to me, will not have any bitter agony in store for me. I have already made a trial of it. I have been for an entire year in troubles of every kind. I have never murmured at them. At the moment when I was seized, I had twice presented a pistol at my forehead, which missed fire. I desired not to be taken alive. At any rate I have this advantage, that of having drunk beforehand all the bitterness of the chalice; and it appears to me that this moment is not so painful. Charlotte, bury your grief, and only inspire our children with modest virtues. It is so difficult to do well for one's country. Brutus, in poignarding a tyrant, — Cato, in piercing his bosom to escape from him, — did not prevent Rome from being oppressed. I believe myself to be devoted for the people. If, as a recompence, I receive death, I have the conscience of my good intentions. It is sweet to think that I bear to the tomb my own esteem, and that one day that of the public will be rendered to me. My love! I leave you in misery! what grief for me! And if they should give you all I possessed, you will not have even bread, for you know, whatever people may have said, that I possessed nothing. However, Charlotte, let not this consideration plunge you in despair. Work, my love! you can do so. Teach your children to work when they are old enough. Oh! my beloved; if you could in this way avoid having recourse to strangers! Be, if it be possible, as proud as I. Hope still; hope in Him who is all powerful; He is my consolation in this last moment. The human race has long since recognised his existence; and I have too much reason to think that order must reign in some part, not to believe in the immortality of my soul. He is great, just, and good, that God before whose tribunal I am about to appear. I bear to him a heart, if not exempt from weakness, at least devoid of crime, and pure in intention: and as Rousseau so well expresses it, 'who slumbers in the bosom of a father is not anxious about awakening!'

"Kiss my children, love them, educate them; comfort yourself, and console my mother and my family. Adieu, adieu for ever!

"Your own
"SALLES."

IV. "And you, who are you?" they asked Guadet. "I am Guadet." "Executioner," replied the Eschines of La Gironde, "do your office." "Go with my head in your hand, and demand your wages from the tyrants of my country; they never saw it without blenching; in beholding it, they will again turn pale." On proceeding to death, Guadet said to the people:—"Look at me well; behold the last of your representatives." Upon the scaffold, Guadet desired to speak; the drums drowned his voice. "People," cried he, indignantly, "behold the eloquence of tyrants! they stifle the voice of the free man, that silence may cover their crimes."

Barbaroux, Pétion, and Buzot learned at Saint Emilion of the arrest and death of their colleagues. The ground, everywhere undermined around them, could not delay to engulf them. They departed by night from their refuge, carrying as their only provision a hollow loaf, into which the foresight of their host had inserted a piece of cold meat; and they had, besides, some handsful of green peas in the pockets of their garments. They walked as chance directed a part of the night. The long immobility of their limbs in the refuges wherein they had languished for eight months, had enervated their strength; above all that of Barbaroux; his weight, his stature, and a precocious obesity, rendered him ill adapted for walking.

At break of day the three friends found, near Chatillon, a village, of the name and site of which they were ignorant. It was the day of the village festival. The fife and drum resounding through the lanes, convoked, before Aurora dawned, the inhabitants to the banquet and the dance. Volunteers, with the musket upon their shoulders, passed, singing upon their march. The fugitives, their minds absorbed in their situation, tormented by sleeplessness and fever, thought that the roll-call was beaten, and that every one was roaming the fields to approach them. They halted, huddled themselves under the shelter of a hedge, and appeared to deliberate a moment. Suddenly some shepherds, who observed them from afar, saw the light of the priming, and heard the report of fire-arms. One of the three suspected men fell with his face to the earth, the other two fled with all speed, and disappeared in the confines of a wood. The volunteers ran towards the report.

They found a young man of elevated stature, of noble form, with a glance not yet extinguished, weltering in his blood. He had shivered his jaw by a pistol-shot. His mutilated tongue refused him any other language than signs. They bore him off to Castillon. His linen was marked with an R. and a B. They asked him if he were Buzot; he raised his head: if he were Barbaroux, he lowered it affirmatively. Conducted to Bordeaux upon a tumbril, and bedewing the streets with his blood, he was recognised from the beauty of his form; and the blade of the guillotine ended his misery, by separating his head from his body.

V. No one knows what the forests and darkness conceal relative to the fate, during the many days and nights of

Pétion and Buzot. Was the suicide of their young companion a weakness or an example in their eyes? Did they fire a pistol at themselves upon the approach of some savage beast, whose steps they mistook for those of men who followed them? Did they open their veins at the foot of some tree? Did they die of hunger, of fatigue, or of cold? Did the one survive the other? And who last remained and expired upon the corpse of his comrade? In fine, did they die in a nocturnal and deadly combat, against the carnivorous animals who pursued them as approaching prey?

Mystery! that most terrible of all fates, involves in obscurity the last moments of Buzot and Pétion! The gleaners only, some days after the death of Barbaroux, found, here and there, in a corn field, at the confines of a wood, torn hats, shoes, and some tatters of human remains, rent in pieces by the wolves. These garments, these remains, were all that were left of Pétion and Buzot! The soil of the republic could not even find sepulture for the men who had established it. All La Gironde had vanished with these two last tribunes. They left it to time to resolve the enigma of popularity. The one who had been called *King Pétion*, and the other, who was still derisively styled *le Roi Buzot*, had come from Paris and from Caen to seek their destiny in a furrow in the fields of La Gironde. The land of federalism itself devoured these men, these men guilty of a dream against unity of the country! Is any other decision necessary? Can we decide from the devoured and dislocated remains left by the wild beasts upon the field of death. No! let us bewail them, let us bury them and pass on!

VI. The Revolution in these last months of 1793, and in the first months of 1794, seemed to retrace its steps, as a conqueror after a victory, to strike, one by one, the men who had endeavoured to modify and arrest it, commencing with those the nearest allied to it, and ending with those who held themselves most apart from it: the Girondists first, and their partisans, the constitutionalists afterwards, and the pure royalists last.

The great names of the Constituent Assembly seemed to be lively protestations against the theories of the republic. Constitutional royalty, which the monarchists had defended, accused the tyranny of the Committee of Public Safety. The legal liberty which they had shown in perspective, contrasted with the dictatorship of La Montagne. They could not permit these witnesses and accusers to live even though mute. Mirabeau was no more. The Pantheon had rescued him from the scaffold. La Fayette expiated, in the mines of Olmutz, the crime of moderation. Clermont-Tonnere was dead, murdered on the 2d of September. Cazalès and Maury were in exile. The Lameths wandered in the land of the stranger. Siéyès was silent or affected to slumber, at the foot of La Montagne. The right side groaned in the prisons. Barnave, Duport, and Bailly still lived. They were thought of. A remembrance of the Jacobins was death. Misfortune to the name which was pronounced too loud. That of Barnave still echoed in the memory of the reformers of the monarch.

VII. Since the 18th of August, Barnave, useless from that period in the councils of the queen, had retired to Grenoble, his native city. He was there received as a man who had adorned his country by the brilliancy of his talent and the probity of his life. They reproached him little for withdrawing himself aside from the republican movements which exceeded his opinions. He was considered as one of those instruments which the people reject, when they have done their work, but which they do not break. Barnave, without applauding the republic, but without protesting against it, limited himself to the fulfilment of his duties as a citizen. He refused emigration, the road to which was open to him, at some steps from the house of his father. He continued to enjoy this popularity of esteem which sometimes survives lost position. He had been implicated in Paris, in the suspicions which were current in 1794, upon a pretended Austrian Committee. Fauchet had given him to understand this, as well as the Lameths, Duport, and Montmorin, in an act of accusation which sent these secret counsellors of Louis XVI. before the high national court of Orleans.

Barnave learnt his crime by this act of accusation. He was arrested, during the night, in his country house of Saint Robert, in the environs of Grenoble. Conducted to the prison of this town, his mother came to see him, under the disguise of a servant. From the depth of his cell, Barnave followed with his eye the phases of the Revolution, and the misfortunes of the king. He only regretted his liberty, as he could not defend, by his voice, before the Convention, the head of this prince.

The republic tarried not to listen to this repentance. Barnave languished ten months in the fort Barreaux, in an alpine and frozen region of the mountains which bound France and Savoy. The frontier was beneath his eyes. His windows were not barred. Surveillance slumbered. He could fly: he would not do so. "Obscure, I would save myself," said he; "but celebrated and responsible for the great acts of the Revolution, I must remain to answer for my opinions with my head, and for my honour with my blood."

VIII. He employed this long suspense of his destiny in extending his ideas, and completing his political studies. He sounded the spirit of human revolutions, by the report of those of his own country. He wrote social and historical meditations which have survived. One finds therein rather wisdom than genius. One admires the honesty of his spirit. One does not feel its greatness. One feels astonished that such a voice should have been able to balance, during an hour, the virile voice of Mirabeau. The pretended rivalship, between these two orators, is only explained, by that optical error of all ages and of all nations, which levels to the eye of the moment men who cannot be on a par in the eyes of the future.

Barnave merited neither the glory nor the outrage of this comparison. Limited in intelligence, fluent of speech, he was one of those men at the bar, with whom eloquence is an art of the mind, and not an explosion of the soul. His true honour laid in having been worthy of being crushed by Mirabeau. The desire of surpassing, in popularity, him whom he was so far from equalling in genius, drew from him, during some months, those words of complaisance fatal to monarchy and to his own glory. An honest man, he compensated, by the purity of his public life, and by a generous return to his unfortunate king, for the ill-obtained applause of the multitude. He abdicated his popularity as soon as it became the reward of crime.

IX. Barnave having arrived at Paris, the Committee of

Public Safety were embarrassed by him. Danton, on his return from Arcis-sur-Aube, sought to save him. He promised this to Barnave's mother and sister. They had followed their son and their brother, as two suppliants attached to the wheels of the carriage which conducted him to Paris. Danton dared not abide by his promise. The only favour which Barnave obtained was that of embracing his mother and sister, for the last time. He defended himself with great presence of mind, and remarkable eloquence of discussion, before the tribunal. But there where the voice of Vergniaud had withered, what could the cold argument of Barnave avail! He returned to his cell condemned. The courageous Baillot, his colleague in the Constituent Assembly, came there to console his last hours. Duport-Dutertre, the ancient minister of justice, was associated with Barnave in judgment and punishment. After the arrest, Duport contented himself with saying disdainfully to his judges, "In a revolution the people kill men, posterity judges them." Duport exhibited more firmness upon the tumbril than his companion. He was perceived to lean often towards him, and animate his courage. The attitude of Barnave betrayed an enfeebled body, and a mind framed rather for the tribune than the scaffold. His great name, running from mouth to mouth, silenced the crowd. The people seemed themselves to reflect upon these vast vicissitudes of popularity. They did not insult the orator—they left him to die.

X. Bailly remained. It seems that the people were desirous of avenging themselves by their outrages, for the esteem with which they had a short time previously lavished on this mayor of Paris. The people have their revenge. It is almost as dangerous to please them too much as to offend them; they punish their idols for the crime of having seduced them. Bailly, a man of wealth, a philosopher, a scholar, and illustrious astronomer, impassioned for liberty, because liberty was a truth of the greatest acquirement on earth, cherished in his soul the religion of mankind. His worship, illumined by a matured reason, elevated itself to faith, but not to fanaticism. As president of the National Assembly, having taken first the oath of the *Jeu de Paume* (the Tennis Court), his whole conduct had since been conformable to these two thoughts: to deprive the court of despotic power; and to restore a part of the power to the king, in order to preserve gradation in conquest, and order in movement. He was a civil La Fayette, — one of those men whom new ideas place in advance, and crown with esteem and honours under their name. The name of Bailly was an inscription upon the frontispiece of the Revolution. If Bailly were not on a par with this destiny by his genius, he was so by his character. His administration had been a series of triumphs of the people over the court. When bloody agitations began to stain the victories of the people, Bailly spoke as a wise man, and acted as a magistrate. One single day lost the popularity of this worthy life. That was the day when the Girondists, united to the Jacobins, fomented the Insurrection of the Champ-de-Mars. Bailly, in concordance with La Fayette, unfurled the red flag, marched at the head of the armed citizens against sedition, and crushed the tumult around the altar of the country. Blood was shed; Bailly felt the bitterness of it. He became the execration of the Jacobins. His name signified in their mouths the assassin of the people. He could no longer govern the city where the blood spilled called out against him. He abdicated in favour of Pétion, and withdrew himself for two years, to retirement, in the neighbourhood of Nantes.

The weariness of repose, that punishment of men long accustomed to the bustle of business, soon attacked him. He desired again to approach Paris, to hear, at a less distance, the movements of the republic. Recognised by the people, he was rescued with difficulty from the fury of a meeting, thrown into the Conciergerie, and sent to the revolutionary tribunal. His name condemned him. He marched to death amidst the throng of the multitude. His punishment was no less than a protracted assassination. His head bare, his hair cut, his hands tied behind his back with an enormous cord; his body covered only by a shirt, beneath a freezing sky, he slowly traversed the quarters of the capital. The refuse and scum of Paris, whom he had long restrained as a magistrate, appeared to rise and precipitate themselves like a torrent around the wheels. The executioners themselves, indignant at this ferocity, reproached the people with their outrages. The populace was only the more implacable. The horde had insisted that the guillotine, generally placed at the Place-de-la-Concorde, should be that day transported to the Champ-de-Mars, that blood might wash out the blood, upon the ground where it had been shed. Men who called themselves relations, friends, or avengers of the victims of the Champ-de-Mars, carried a red flag in derision, by the side of the tumbril, at the end of a pole. They dipped it, from time to time, in the gutter, and violently whipped Bailly's face with it. Others spat in his face. His features lacerated, and soiled with dust and blood, no longer presented a human form. Roars of laughter and applause encouraged these horrors. The march, interrupted at stations, lasted three hours.

Arrived at the place of execution, these refined men of wrath made Bailly descend from the tumbril, and forced him to make on foot the tour of the Champ-de-Mars; they ordered him to lick the ground on which the blood of the people had flowed. Even this expiation did not satisfy them. The guillotine had been erected in the enclosure itself of the Champ-de-Mars. The earth of the federation appeared to the people too sacred to be stained by an execution. The executioners were ordered to take down the scaffold piece by piece, and to reconstruct it close to the bank of the Seine, upon a dung heap accumulated from the sewers of Paris. The executioners were constrained to obey. The machine was dismantled. As if to parody the punishment of Christ bearing his Cross, the monsters loaded the shoulders of the old man with the heavy beams which supported the platform of the scaffold. Their blows compelled the condemned to drag himself along under this weight. He fainted under his burden; coming to himself, he arose, and shouts of laughter rallied him upon his age and infirmities. They made him look on, during an hour, at the tardy reconstruc- of his own scaffold.

Rain mingled with snow inundated his head, and froze his limbs. His body trembled with cold. His soul was firm. His grave and placid countenance preserved its serenity. His impassable reason passed above this populace, and looked beyond them. He tasted martyrdom, and did not find it more bitter than the hope for which he submitted to it. He discoursed calmly with the assistants. One of them seeing him paralyzed with cold, said to him, "You tremble, Bailly." "Yes, my friend," replied the old man to him, "but it is with cold." At last the axe terminated this scene of protracted cruelty. It had lasted five hours. Bailly pitied the people, thanked the executioner, and confided himself to immortality. Few victims ever met with viler executioners, few executioners with so exalted a victim. Shame at the foot of the scaffold, glory above, and pity every where. One blushed to be a man on beholding these people. One gloried in this title in contemplating Bailly. The more ferocious man is, the more one should love him. The crimes of a people are only a degradation. The lessons of sages do not suffice to instruct them, they must have martyrs to compensate them. Bailly was one of these most holy martyrs, for, in dying by the hand of liberty, he yet died for her. He believed in the people, in spite of the people. He reproached them with their injustice, not with his blood.

XI. In the evening, on the recital of this execution, Robespierre lamented Bailly! "It is thus," exclaimed he at supper with Duplay, "that they will martyrize ourselves." Duplay, his host, the judge of the revolutionary tribunal, having desired to explain to Robespierre why he had absolved this great accused, "Do not speak of it," said Robespierre to him; "I do not ask you for an account of your judgments, but the republic demands of you an account of your conscience." Duplay spoke no more to Robespierre of condemnations and executions. Robespierre ordered his door to be closed that evening, as a token of mourning. Was this grief? Was it a presentiment? But the axe already no longer selected; all ranks were mingled upon the scaffold. A courtesan died by the side of a sage. The people applauded equally. It had lost all discernment of vice or virtue.

Madame du Barry, mistress of Louis XV., died at a short interval from Bailly. This woman had as a child commenced the traffic of her charms. Her marvellous beauty had attracted the notice of the purveyors to the king's pleasures. They had raised her from obscure vice to offer her to the scandal of crowned infamy. Louis XV. had formed of the rank of his mistresses a kind of institution of his court. Mademoiselle Lange Vaubernier, under the name of Madame du Barry, had succeeded to Madame de Pompadour. Louis XV.

required the salt of scandal to season his palled appetite. Therein consisted his majesty. The only respect which he imposed upon his court was the respect of his vices. Madame du Barry had reigned under his name. The nation, it must be owned, had most shamefully submitted to this yoke. The nobility, the ministry, the clergy, philosophers, all had adulated the idol of the king. Louis XIV. had prepared their minds to this servitude by causing his courtiers to adore the despotism of his amours.

XII. Still young at the death of Louis XV., Madame du Barry had been sequestered for some months in a convent, for the sake of decency — a characteristic of the new reign. Soon freed from this confinement, she had lived in a splendid retreat near Paris — the Pavillon de Luciennes — on the borders of the forest of St. Germain. Immense riches, the gifts of Louis XV., rendered her exile almost as brilliant as her reign. The old Duke de Brissac remained attached to the favourite. He loved her still for her beauty, at the time when others loved her for her rank. Madame du Barry abhorred the Revolution, that reign of the people who despised courtesans, and who spoke of virtue. Although repulsed from the court of Louis XVI., and by Marie Antoinette, she had lamented their misfortunes, deplored their fate, and had devoted herself to the cause of the throne and of emigration.

After the 10th of August she made a journey to England. In London she wore mourning for Louis XVI., and consecrated her immense fortune to relieve the miseries of the emigrants in exile. But the greater part of her riches had been secretly buried by her and the Duke de Brissac at the foot of a tree in her park at Luciennes. After the death of the Duke de Brissac, massacred at Versailles, Madame du Barry did not desire to confide to any one the secret of her treasure. She resolved to return to France, to disinter her diamonds, and carry them to London.

She had confided in her absence the care and administration of Luciennes to a young negro, named Zamore. She had brought up this child, through a womanish caprice, as one rears a domestic animal. She caused herself to be painted by the side of this black, to resemble in her portraits, by the contrast of countenance and colour, the Venetian courtesans of Titian. She had conceived for this negro the tenderness of a mother. Zamore was ungrateful and cruel. He was intoxicated with revolutionary liberty. He had caught the fever of the people. Ingratitude appeared to him the virtue of the oppressed. He betrayed his benefactress; he denounced her treasures; he delivered her to the revolutionary committee of Luciennes, of which he was a member. Madame du Barry, elevated and enriched by favouritism, perished by a favourite. Judged and condemned without discussion, shown to the people as one of the stains of the throne of which it was necessary to purify the air of the republic, she went to death amidst the yells of the populace and the contempt of the indifferent. She was still in the brilliancy of hardly-matured age. Her beauty, yielded to the executioner, was her crime in the sight of the crowd. She was dressed in white. Her black hair, cut behind the head by the scissors of the executioner, left her neck exposed. Her locks in front of the head, which the executioner had not shortened, floated and covered her eyes and her cheeks: she lifted her head and threw them back, in order that her countenance might move the people. She did not cease to invoke pity, in the most humiliating terms. Tears flowed incessantly from her eyes upon her bosom. Her piercing cries prevailed over the noise of the wheels and the clamour of the multitude. It seemed as if the knife struck this woman beforehand, and deprived her a thousand times of life. "Life! life!" she cried; "life for my repentance!—life for all my devotion to the republic!—life for all my riches to the nation!" The people laughed and shrugged their shoulders. They showed her, by signs, the pillow of the guillotine, upon which her charming head was about to sleep. The passage of the courtesan to the scaffold was but one lamentation. Under the knife she still wept. The court had enervated her soul. She alone, amongst all the women executed, died a coward, because she died neither for opinion, for virtue, nor for love, but for vice. She dishonoured the scaffold as she had dishonoured the throne.

XIII. General Biron, so famous at court under the name of the Duke de Lauzun, died at the same time, but as a soldier.

The Duke de Lauzun had in his youth carried levity even to defiance. His valour and his wit threw a halo over his faults. Scandal became for him renown. He desired to pass as having been beloved by the queen. His memoirs are only notes of his amours. Ruined at an early period by his prodigality, he sought other glory in war. He followed La Fayette to America, and made himself an enthusiast of liberty, not for virtue, but from fashion. A friend of the Duc d'Orléans, he followed that prince in all his changes. Parties forgive all those who serve them. The Duc de Biron precipitated himself from the favour of courts to the favour of the people. He only changed the theatre. He served with bravery in the army of the North, in the army of the Rhine, in that of the Alps, and, lastly, in La Vendée. Once launched into the Revolution, he felt that there was no safety but in following it to the end. To stop at any stage was impossible: the current was too rapid. Inconsiderateness was his star. He gaily gave his name, his arm, and his blood to the republic. The soldiers adored him. The plebeian generals were jealous of his ascendency; they did not brook ancient aristocrats with impunity. Quarrels broke out in La Vendée between Rossignol, the Jacobin general, and Biron, and Biron was sacrificed.

Brought to Paris, imprisoned in the Conciergerie, and condemned to death, he entered his prison as he would enter his tent on the evening of a skirmish. He shrouded death by indifference; he desired to taste, up to the last moment, the only pleasures which remained to the prisoners — the sensualities of the table. He had his gaolers and guards as guests in lieu of other companions of pleasure. He caused oysters to be brought him, and white wine. He drank deeply. The executioner's men arrived. "Permit me to finish my oysters," said Biron to them. "In the line you follow you must require strength — drink with me!" This death, which imitates the unreflecting bravery of a young epicurean, in a man of mature age, has more display than dignity. The smile is misplaced upon the verge of eternity. Indifference, at the last hour, is not the attitude of true heroes; it is the sophistry of death. The people clapped their hands at the last moments of Biron, because in braving reflection he also braved punishment. He died as he had desired to live — gallant, proud, and applauded. It was the last day of the year 1793. Others were to die on the morrow, the 1st of January. Death knew the calendar no longer. Tears confounded themselves in executions. Blood was no longer stanched.

XIV. Four thousand six hundred *détenus*, in the prisons of Paris alone, awaited their judgment. Fouquier-Tinville was not able to draw up all the accusations, but joined them *en masse*, and almost by chance. Loaded by the number of accused, and pressed by the impatience of the people, Fouquier-Tinville no longer quitted the cabinet of the hall of justice, wherein he drew out his accusations. He took his repast precipitately upon the table where he signed the sentences of death. He slept in the tribunal upon a mattrass. He allowed himself no leisure. He complained of not having time to see his wife and children. The zeal of the republic consumed him. He forgot that it was the zeal of extermination. He called it his duty. He believed himself the arm of the people, the axe of the republic, and the thunder of the Revolution. One life spared, one guilty person forgotten, one accused acquitted, grieved him. Strange perversion of the human heart by fanaticism! Fouquier received every evening from the Committee of Public Safety the list of suspected, whom it was necessary to imprison, or to judge. Fouquier-Tinville was blinded by the blood which he caused to flow. But he returned sometimes consternated himself at the prodigious number of executions which had been required of him, and the names which he had condemned. He opened from time to time a gate of safety to the accused, by suggesting answers to them which might vindicate them. He thus saved, in the magistracy, some men whom he had once known and respected.

Sometimes the austere virtue of these victims rejected the life which was offered to them at the expense of a lie. The religion of truth made voluntary martyrs, of which here is an example attested by one of the judges himself, and worthy of bequest to futurity.

XV. Almost all the ancient members of parliament in the kingdom died in turn upon the scaffold. One amongst them, M. Legrand d'Alleray, an honest old man, respected by all, and bowed down by years, was conducted with his wife to the revolutionary tribunal, accused, both of them, of having carried on a correspondence with their emigrant son, and of having assisted him in his exile. Fouquier-Tinville was moved. He made a sign of intelligence to the accused, to dictate to him, by eye and gesture, the response which might save him. "There is," said he, aloud, "the letter which accuses you, but I know your handwriting; I have often had documents of yours under my inspection, while you sat in parliament. This letter is not yours: the characters are visibly counterfeited." "Pass the letter to me," said the old man to Fouquier-Tinville. Then, after having considered it with scrupulous attention, "You deceive yourself," said he to the public accuser; "this letter is in my handwriting." Fouquier, confounded by this sincerity, which defeated his indulgence, did not fear; he offered another pretext of acquittal to the accused. "There is a law," said he to him, "which forbids the parents of emigrants to correspond with their relatives, and to send them any assistance, under pain of death: this law you doubtless were not aware of?" "You still deceive yourself," answered M. d'Alleray. "I knew this law. But I know another, engraven by nature in the heart of all fathers and mothers, —it is that which commands them to sacrifice their lives in order to succour their children." The accuser, determined in his design, was not discouraged by this second answer. He again offered five or six excuses of the same kind to the accused. M. d'Alleray eluded them all by his refusal to change, or even to turn aside from the truth. Ultimately perceiving the intention of Fouquier-Tinville, "I thank you," said he, "for the efforts you make to save me; but it would be necessary to purchase our lives by a lie. My wife and myself prefer rather to die. We have grown old together without ever having lied; we will not do so now to save a remnant of life. Do your duty, we will do ours. We will not accuse you of our death, we will accuse the law only." The juries wept from emotion, but they sent the virtuous suicide to the scaffold.

XVI. The year 1794 inaugurated itself thus in blood. The guillotine appeared to be the only institution in France. Danton and Saint-Just had caused the suspension of the constitution and the revolutionary government to be proclaimed. The law was the Committee of Public Safety,—the administration was the arbitrary will of the commissioners of the Convention. Justice was suspicion or vengeance,—the guarantee was denunciation. The government was the scaffold. The Convention was compelled to strike or to be struck itself. France,—shot at Toulon, mowed down with grape at Lyons, drowned at Nantes, guillotined at Paris, imprisoned, denounced, sequestered, and terrified throughout,—resembled a nation conquered and ravaged by one of those great invasions of people who swept away the ancient civilisation on the fall of the Roman empire; bringing with them other gods, other masters, other laws, and other manners to Europe. It was the invasion of a new idea, to which resistance had handed fire and the sword. The Convention was no longer a government, but a camp. The republic was no longer a society, but a massacre of conquered men upon a field of carnage. The fury of ideas is more implacable than the fury of men; for men have heart, and opinion has none. Systems are brutal forces which bewail not even that which they crush. As the bullets on a field of battle, they strike without choice, without justice, and frustrate the end which was assigned to them. The Revolution belied its doctrine by its tyranny: it stained its right by its violence,—it dishonoured its struggles by its executions. Thus did it incarnadine the purest causes. We do not say it to excuse the people, but to mourn for them. Nothing is more beautiful than to behold a new idea shine upon the horizon of human intelligence; nothing is so legitimate as to cause it to combat and conquer prejudice, customs, and the vicious institutions which resist it. Nothing is so horrible as to see it martyrise its enemies. The encounter then changes to executions, the liberator into the oppressor, and the apostle into the executioner. Such was—involuntarily among some, theoretically among others—the part of the members of La Montagne, and of the Committee of Public Safety. Their theories protested, but their selfish motives carried them away. They permitted the vengeance of the people, the fury of anarchy, and the cruelties of the proconsuls to proceed, even to the spoliation and assassination of degenerate Rome. The party of the Commune, composed of Hébert, of Chaumette, of Momoro, Ronsin, Vincent, and other more unbridled demagogues, went in advance, and dragged the Convention after them.

XVII. During these executions, the party of legislators essayed from time to time to embody great principles and great innovations, as oracles to the noise of thunder. Robespierre, now dominant in the Committee of Public Safety, threw into notes, since revealed, the vague lineaments of a government of justice, equality, and liberty, to which he hoped at last to attain. As in every thing he has said, done, or written, one finds therein more philosophy than policy.

"There must be one will," says one of these posthumous notes. "This will must be either republican or royalist."

"Provided it be republican, there must be republican ministers, republican journals, republican deputies, and a republican power."

"Foreign war is a mortal scourge."

"Interior dangers arise from the citizens. To triumph over the citizens, the people must be rallied. The people must ally themselves with the Convention, and let the Convention avail itself of the people."

"In foreign affairs, alliance with petty powers. But all diplomacy is impossible, as long as we have not unity of power."

After the means, here is the result: —

"What is the result? The execution of the constitution in favour of the people."

"What will be our enemies? Riches and the vicious."

"What means will they employ? Hypocrisy and calumny."

"What must be done? Enlighten the people. But what are the obstacles to their instruction? The mercenary scribblers, who bewilder them by false and imprudent articles."

"What to conclude from that? That these writers must be proscribed, as the most dangerous enemies of the country, and good articles must be liberally paid for."

"What are the means of terminating a foreign war? Place republican generals at the head of our armies, and punish the traitors."

"What are the means of terminating a civil war? Punish the conspirators, above all the deputies and guilty administrators; send patriotic troops under patriotic chiefs; make terrible examples of all the wretches who have outraged liberty and spilt the blood of patriots."

"Lastly, the commissariat and the popular laws."

"What other obstacle to the instruction of the people? Misery."

"When will the people become enlightened? When they have bread, and when wealth and governments cease to hire the pen and the perfidious tongue to deceive them; when the interest of wealth and that of the government shall be amalgamated with that of the people."

"When will their interest be amalgamated with that of the people? *Never!*" . . . .

At this terrible word, fallen at the conclusion of this interior dialogue of Robespierre with himself, the pen had ceased to write. Doubt or discouragement had dictated this last word. One felt that, in a mind determined to hope, this word wished to say, "We must bend by force under the level of justice and equality all those who refuse to combine their interest with the interest of the people." The logic of terror emanated from this word. It was full of blood.

XVIII. In all the meetings of the Convention and of the Jacobins of November and December, until 1794, one finds a great number of discussions, of discourses, or of decrees, in which breathes the soul of a popular government. Egotism appears to efface itself before the principle of devotion to the country. The poorer classes, who possessed nothing but the country itself, had nothing to bestow upon it but their blood. The Convention appeared in these legislative assemblies to write a chapter of the evangelical constitution of the future. The taxes were proportioned to riches. The indigent were sacred. The infirm were alleviated. Children without parents were adopted by the republic. Illicit maternity was rescued from shame, which kills the infant by dishonouring the mother. The liberty of conscience was proclaimed. Universal morality was taken as a type of the laws. Slavery and negro commerce were abolished. The conscience of the human race was invoked as a supreme law. A series of philanthropic and popular measures instituted political charity in action, as a treaty of alliance between the rich and the poor. Social power was equally dispersed amongst all citizens. Elementary and transcendant instruction, like a divine debt, distributed its light amongst the depths of the population. The love of the people seemed to expand itself in every jurisdiction of the administration.

One felt that the Revolution had not been made to usurp, but to lavish power, morality, equality, justice, and well-being upon the masses. The divinity of the spirit of the Revolution was this,—the spirit of light and charity in the deliberations of the Convention, an exterminating spirit in its political acts. Men ask themselves involuntarily wherefore this social contrast between the social laws of the Convention and its political measures—between this philosophy and this blood? It was because the social laws of the Convention emanated from its dogmas, and that its political acts emanated from its wrath. The one were its principles, the other its passions.

Proud of the new era which it inaugurated for the world, it desired that the French republic should become one of the dates of history amongst mankind. It instituted the republican calendar (*calendrier republicain*), as if to remind men for ever that they were not truly men but from the day when they proclaimed themselves free. It also effaced from the denomination of the months and days of which time is composed, the traces of religion imprinted on the Gregorian calendar. It further ordained that the division of the days into tenths, and no longer into weeks, should not henceforward confound the initial day, or the period of days, with the day of prayer and of repose exclusively consecrated to Catholicism. It did not desire that the church should continue to point out to the people the instants of their labour or repose. It determined to rescue time itself from the Christian priesthood, which had stamped every thing with its sign since it had gained possession of the empire.

In this system the names of days were significant of their place in the numerical order of the republican decade. They explained their order in the arrangement of days by names derived from the Latin. These were, *primidi*, *duodi*, *tridi*, *quartidi*, *quintidi*, *sextidi*, *septidi*, *octidi*, *nonidi*, *decadi*. These purely numerical significations possessed the advantage of presenting cyphers to the memory, but they had the inconvenience of not presenting images to the mind. Images alone coloured and impressed names on the imaginations of the people.

The denominations of the months, on the contrary, borrowed from the characters of the seasons and the labours of agriculture, were significant as pictures, and sonorous as echoes of rural life. They were, for autumn (October) *Vendémiaire*, which harvests the grapes; (November) *Brumaire*, which covers the sky with mists; (December) *Frimaire*, which covers the mountains with hail. For winter, (January) *Nivose*, which whitens the earth with snow; (February) *Pluviose*, which waters it with rain; (March) *Ventose*, which unchains the tempests. For the spring, (April) *Germinal*, which causes the seeds to grow; (May) *Floréal*, which makes the plants flourish; (June) *Prairial*, when the meadows are mowed. Lastly, for summer, (July) *Messidor*, which is the harvest month; (August) *Thermidor*, which warms the furrows; and (September) *Fructidor*, which ripens the fruits. Thus every thing was relevant to agriculture, — the first and the last of arts. The phases of empires, or the superstitions of nations were no more the type of time — that measure of life.

Everything lifted itself up to nature alone. It was the same with the administration, the finance, criminal justice, the civil code, and the rural code. Special men of the Convention prepared the plans of these legislations upon the bases of philosophy, of science, and of equality, — bases laid down by the Constituent Assembly. These ideas, of which afterwards the organising despotism of Napoleon availed itself, and to which he only gave his name, had all been conceived, elaborated, or promulgated by the Convention. Napoleon unjustly robbed it of its glory. History must not sanction these larcenies. She must restore them to the republic. The fruits of philosophy and liberty will never appertain to despotism. The men whom Napoleon called into his councils, there to prepare his frame-works — Cambacerès, Siéyès, Carnot, Thibaudeau, Merlin, &c. — sprung from the committees. Like unfaithful workmen, they bore off into these workshops of servitude the instruments and *chefs d'œuvre* of liberty!

XIX. While, however, the Committee of Public Safety protected the frontiers, stifled civil war, and meditated humane and moral resolutions, Paris and the departments presented the spectacle of saturnalia of liberty. Delirium and fury seemed to have seized upon the people. The intoxication of truth is more terrible than that of error amongst men, because it lasts longer, and profanes the most holy causes. This intoxication carried the masses to the most hideous excesses against the temples, the altars, the images of ancient adoration, and even against the sepulchres of kings.

Of the three institutions which the Revolution desired to modify or destroy — the throne, the nobility, and the religion of the state — there remained standing only the religion of the state, because, taking refuge in conscience, and amalgamating itself with the very idea, it was impossible for its persecutors to follow it so far. The civil constitution of the clergy; the oath imposed upon the priests; that oath declared schism by the court of Rome; the retractations which the mass of the priests had made of this oath to remain attached to the Catholic centre; the expulsion of these refractory priests from their presbyteries and their churches; the installation of a national and republican clergy in the place of these faithful ministers to Rome; the persecution against these rebel ecclesiastics to the law, for remaining obedient to the faith, their imprisonment, their proscription, *en masse*, on board the vessels of the republic at Rochefort, — all these quarrels, all this violence, all these exiles, all these executions, and all these martyrdoms of Catholic priests, had swept away in appearance the ancient worship from the face of the republic. The constitutional worship — a palpable inconsequence of sworn priests, who exercised a pretended Catholicism in spite of the spiritual chief of Catholicism, was nothing more than a sacred toy which the Convention had left to the country people in order not to destroy their customs too suddenly. But the impatient philosophers of the Convention, of the Jacobins, and of the Commune, felt indignant at this resemblance to religion, which survived, in the eyes of the people, religion itself. They burned to inaugurate in its place the abstracted adoration of a God without form, without dogma, and without worship. The greater number even openly proclaimed atheism as the only doctrine worthy of intrepid spirits in the material logic of the period. They spoke of virtue, and denied that God whose existence can only bestow a sense to the word Virtue. They spoke of liberty, and denied that eternal justice which can alone avenge innocence and punish oppression. The greater part intoxicated themselves with these theories of atheism, and thought themselves delivered from every duty in feeling themselves freed from God. Thus go the deplorable oscillations of the human mind, from superstition to the annihilation of creeds, without ever being enabled to arrest itself in the true balance of reason and virtue.

XX. The leaders of the Commune, and above all Chaumette and Hébert, encouraged in the people these accesses of impiety, and these seditions, against all worship. They demanded brilliant apostacies from the priests, and often obtained them. Some ecclesiastics, many under the empire of fear, others from real incredulity, ascended the chair to declare that they had been until then impostors. Acclamations awaited these renegades from the altar. The once sacred ceremonies were derisively parodied. They dressed an ox or an ass in pontifical ornaments; they paraded these abominations through the streets; they drank wine from the chalice, and shut the church. They wrote upon the gate of the place of sepulchre, *sommeil éternel* (eternal rest). In a few months the immense *matériel* of Catholic worship, — cathedrals, churches, monasteries, presbyteries, towers, belfries, ministers, and ceremonies — had disappeared. The representatives in mission were themselves astonished at the facility with which all this apparel of ancient institutions had vanished. Religions, whence the power of the state and the richness of benefits withdraw themselves, are, said they, quickly destroyed in the mind. The philosophers of the Commune resolved, in the middle of November, to accelerate this movement in Paris. They knew that if the people so easily disavowed the spirit of their worship, they would not so soon unaccustom themselves to the spectacles and ceremonies which amuse the eye. They desired to possess themselves of the temples, to offer them a new worship, a kind of renewed paganism, whose dogmas where but images, whose adoration was but a ceremonial, and whose divinity supreme, was but reason become in its own person its own God, and adoring itself in its attributes. The laws of the Convention which continued to salary the national Catholic worship, opposed themselves to this violent invasion of this philosophical religion of Chaumette in the cathedral and in the churches of Paris. It was incumbent to cause these ancient buildings to be evacuated by a voluntary renunciation of the constitutional bishop and his clergy. The cries of death which everywhere followed the priests, their blood which flowed in torrents upon all the scaffolds of the republic, the insults of the people to their costume, the full prisons, and the ready guillotine, urged the republican priesthood to this renunciation: they trembled daily lest they might be immolated in the exercise of their functions. The principal motive which still retained a part of these priests, was the salary attached to their altars. An equivalent salary was assured to the principals amongst them, or more lucrative functions in the civil and military administrations of the republic. Hope and threats wrung from them their resignation.

The Bishop Gobel, a man weak in character but sincere in faith, alone resisted. They intimidated him on one side: they reassured him on the other. The tribunes made him tremble. "Citizens," said he, on reading a declaration premeditated and agreed upon with the Commune, "born a plebeian, I had early in my soul the principles of equality. Called to the National Assembly, I recognised one of the first the sovereignty of the people. Their will called me to the episcopal chair of Paris. I have only employed the ascendency which my title and place might confer upon me, in augmenting their attachment to the eternal principles of liberty, equality, and morality,—the necessary bases of every constitution truly republican. To-day, when the will of the people does not admit of other worship, public and national, than that of holy equality, because the sovereign wills it also, I renounce the exercise of my functions as minister of Catholic worship." The vicars of Gobel signed the same declaration. Unanimous acclamation saluted this triumph. Many written or verbal declarations of this kind followed that of the clergy of Paris.

Robert Lindet, Bishop of Evreux, abdicated in other terms. "The morality which I have preached," said he, "is that of every time. The cause of God must not be an occasion of war amongst men. Each citizen ought to regard himself as the priest of his family. The destruction of public fêtes will, however, create an immense void in the customs of your population. Measure this void, and replace these fêtes by fêtes purely national, which may serve as a transition between the reign of superstition and that of reason."

The Bishops Gay, Vernon, and Lalande, and many curates, made declarations of the same nature. The Assembly applauded, as they had done on the night of the 4th of August, when the nobility abdicated their rights of caste. In the midst of this applause Gregory, constitutional Bishop of Blois, entered the hall. He informed himself of the cause of this acclamation. They pressed Gregory to imitate the example of his colleagues. They brought him to the tribune. "Citizens," said he: "I arrive, and I have but very vague ideas of what is passing at this moment. Do they speak to me of sacrifices to the country? I am accustomed to them. Of attachment to the Revolution? My proofs are established. Of revenue attached to the functions of bishop? I abandon it without regret. Is religion discussed? That article is not in your domain: you have no right to attack it. A Catholic by conviction and sentiment, named bishop by the people, it is not from them or from you that I hold my mission. I have been tormented to accept the burden of episcopacy; I am now tormented to obtain from me an abdication which none shall wring from me. Acting according to the sacred principles which are dear to me, and of which I defy you to deprive me, I have endeavoured to do good in my diocese. I remain bishop still to do so. I invoke the liberty of worship."

Murmurs and smiles of pity received this courageous act of conscience. Gregory was accused of desiring to christianize liberty. The hisses of the tribunes accompanied him to his bench. The esteem, however, of men whose philosophy lifted them to God, avenged him for this disdain. Robespierre and Danton bestowed upon him marks of approbation. They were secretly indignant at the violence of Hébert's party against conscience. But the current was too strong to stem at this moment. It drew every worship into the proscription of Catholicism.

Siéyès broke silence to abdicate, not his functions, which he had never exercised, but his character of priest. A philosopher of every time, it was permitted to him to confess his philosophy in his triumph as he had confessed it before his victory over Catholicism.

Chaumette exclaimed that the day when Reason resumed her empire merited a place to itself in the epochs of the Revolution. He demanded that the Committee of Public Instruction should bestow in the new calendar a place to the "Day of Reason."

XXI. "Citizens," said the president of the Convention, "amongst the natural rights of man we have placed the liberty of the exercise of worship. Under this guarantee which we owe to you, you have raised yourselves to the height where philosophy awaits you. Do not dissemble it. These sacerdotal toys insulted the Supreme Being: He desires no other worship than that of Reason. That will be henceforth the national religion."

At these words the president embraced the Bishop of Paris. The priests of his *cortége*, covered with red bonnets, the symbol of enfranchisement, issued in triumph from the hall and dispersed themselves, amidst the noisy acclamations of the crowd in the Tuileries. This abdication of exterior Catholicism by the priests of a nation surrounded for so many ages by the power of this worship, is one of the most characteristic acts of the spirit of the Revolution. Chaumette, Hébert, and their faction, encouraged more and more, after the separation of this day, the profanation and the devastation of the temples, the dispersion of the faithful, and the imprisonment and martyrdom of priests who preferred death to apostacy. The bells, those sonorous voices of christian temples, were cast into money or cannon. The coffers, the reliquaries, these popular apotheoses of the apostles and saints of Catholicism, were despoiled of their precious ornaments and cast into the sewer. The representative Ruhl broke the *sainte ampoule* upon the public place at Rheims, which an ancient legend pretended was brought from heaven to anoint the kings with celestial oil. The directors of the departments forbid the institutors to pronounce the name of God in their tuition to the children of the people. André Dumont, in mission in the departments of the north, wrote to the Convention: "I arrest the priests who permit fêtes and the Sabbath. I cause the cross and the crucifix to disappear. I am in ecstasy — intoxicated. In every direction the churches are shut; the confessionals and saints burned; and wadding for cannon is made of the sacred books of the liturgy. All the citizens cry out, 'No more priests — equality and reason.'"

In La Vendée, the representatives Lequinio and Laigrelot persecuted even the wax merchants who furnished the candles for the ceremonies of worship. At Nantes large piles lighted upon the public place, burned the statues, images, and sacred books. Deputations of patriots came at each sitting of the Convention to bear as tribute the spoils of the altar. The towns and neighbouring villages of Paris ran occasionally to bring also to the Convention, upon chariots, reliquaries of gold, — mitres, chalices, pyx, patera, and chandeliers of their churches. Banners planted in this heap of spoils piled up in irregular masses were inscribed — *Destruction of fanaticism!* The people were avenged by their power to insult what they had so long adored: confounding the Deity himself in their resentments against his worship.

The Commune desired to replace the ceremonies of religion by other spectacles, to which the people flocked as they do to all novel sights. The profanation of sacred places — the parody of mysteries — the *éclat* of pagan rites — were the attractions to these pomps. It was believed that after many ages, there was now a sweeping out of these dark vaults, and that a flood of light, liberty, and reason was entering.

But sincerity of purpose was utterly wanting at these *fêtes.* There was no adoration at these meetings — no soul at these ceremonies. Religions do not spring up in the market-place at the voice of legislators or demagogues. The religion of Chaumette and the Commune was merely a popular opera transferred from the theatre to the tabernacle.

The inauguration of this worship took place at the Convention on the 9th of November. Chaumette, accompanied by the members of the Commune, and escorted by a vast crowd, entered the apartment to the sounds of music and the chorus of patriotic hymns. He conducted by the hand one of the handsomest courtesans of Paris, the idol being half covered with a long blue veil. A band of prostitutes, her companions, followed, escorted by a group of seditious citizens. This foul assemblage entered the hall confusedly, and seated themselves on the benches of the deputies. Lequinio presided.

Chaumette, advancing towards him, raised the veil which covered the courtesan, and her beauty striking the multitude, he exclaimed, "Mortals! recognise no other divinity than Reason, of which I present to you the loveliest and purest personification." At these words Chaumette bowed and made a semblance of adoration. The president, the Convention, and the people affected to pay similar worship. A *fête* in honour of Reason was decreed in the cathedral of Paris. Songs and dances hailed this decree. Some members of the Convention—Armonville, Drouet, and Lecarpentier—joined in these dances. A large portion of the Assembly, however, appeared cold and careless. Satisfied with having voted for these saturnalia, they abandoned them to the people, and blushed at participating in them. Robespierre, seated beside Saint-Just, affected inattention and indifference. His stern countenance did not give way for a moment. He gave a glance at the disorder in the Chamber, made notes, and then conversed with some one sitting next to him. The degradation of the Revolution appeared to him its crime of greatest magnitude, and he was already meditating its repression. At the moment when the popular orgy was at its height, he rose, with ill-repressed indignation, and retired with Saint-Just. He would not by his presence sanction such profanations. Robespierre's departure disconcerted Chaumette. The president raised the sitting, and restored decency within the temple of the laws.

XXII. The 20th of December, the day fixed for the installation of the new worship, the Commune, the Convention, and the authorities of Paris, went in a body to the cathedral. Chaumette, seconded by Laïs, an actor at the opera, had arranged the plan of the *fête.* Mademoiselle Maillard, an actress, in the full bloom of youth and talent, formerly a favourite of the queen, and high in popular admiration, had been compelled by Chaumette's threats to play the part of the divinity of the people. She entered borne on a palanquin, the seat of which was formed of oak branches. Women dressed in white, and wearing tri-coloured girdles, preceded her. Popular societies, fraternal female societies, revolutionary committees, sections, groups of choristers, singers, and opera dancers encircled the throne. With the theatrical cothurni on her feet, a Phrygian cap on her head, her frame scarcely covered with a white tunic, over which a flowing cloak of sky-blue was thrown, the priestess was borne, at the sound of instruments, to the foot of the altar, and placed on the spot where the adoration of the faithful so lately sought the mystic bread transformed into a divinity. Behind her was a vast torch, emblematical of the light of philosophy, destined henceforward to be the sole flame of the interior of these temples. The actress lighted this flambeau. Chaumette, receiving the *encensoir*, in which the perfume was burning, from the hands of the two acolytes, knelt, and waved it in the air. A mutilated statue of the Virgin was lying at his feet. Chaumette apostrophised the marble, and defied it to resume its place in the respect of the people. Dances and hymns attracted the eyes and ears of the spectators. No profanation was wanting in the old temple whose foundations were confounded with the foundations of religion and the monarchy. Forced by terror to be present at this *fête*, Bishop Gobel was there, in a tribune, at this parody of the mysteries which three days before he had celebrated at the same altar. Motionless from fear: tears of shame rolled down the bishop's cheeks.

A similar worship was imitated in all the churches throughout the departments. The light surface of France bent before every wind from Paris. Only instead of divinities borrowed from the theatres, the representatives in mission compelled modest wives and innocent young maidens, to display themselves to the adoration of the public in these spectacles.

XXIII. The devastation of sanctuaries, and the dispersion of relics followed the inauguration of the allegorical worship of Chaumette. They burnt on the Place de Grève, a place consecrated to punishment, the remains of Sainte Geneviève, the popular patroness of Paris, and threw her ashes to the wind. They pursued the traditions of religion even to their sepulchres, whither they had already pursued the memories, respect, and superstition of the country. Death itself was not an inviolable asylum for the relics of kings. A decree of the Convention had commanded, in hatred of royalty, the destruction of the tombs of the kings of St. Denis. The Commune, exaggerating political power, had changed this decree into an attack against the dead, history, and humanity. It had ordered the exhumation of bones, the spoliation of the grave, the carrying away of the lead of the coffins to cast into balls.

This sacrilegious order was executed by the commissioners of the Commune, with all the circumstances and all the derision befitting the horror of such an act. The people, savage over these tombs, seemed to exhume their own history, and scatter it to the winds. The axe broke the gates of bronze presented by Charlemagne, to the Basilica of Saint Denis. Gratings, roofing, statues, all were broken and ground to atoms under the hammer. They raised the stones, ransacked the vaults, violated the resting places of the departed. Curiosity, blending with mockery, sought out, beneath the swathings and shrouds, embalmed corpses, crumbled flesh, calcined bones, empty skulls of kings, queens, princes, ministers, bishops, whose names had been famous in the past history of France. Pépin, the founder of the Carlovingian dynasty, and father of Charlemagne, was now but a pinch of grey ash, which was in a moment scattered by the wind. The mutilated heads of Turenne, Duguesclin, Louis XII., Francois I. were rolled on to the pavement. They trampled on heaps of sceptres, crowns, pastoral croziers, and historical and religious attributes. A deep fosse, in which quick lime was thrown to consume the dead bodies, was made in the cemetery of the Valois. Perfumes were burnt in the caverns to purify the air. There were heard, after each blow of the axe, the shouts of the grave-diggers, who uncovered the remains of a king, and threw about his bones.

Beneath the choir were buried the princes and princesses of the first race, and some of the third. Hugues Capet, Philip the Bold, Philip the Handsome. They rent away their rags of silk, and threw them on a bed of quick lime.

Henry IV., embalmed with skill by Italians, preserved still his historic physiognomy. His uncovered breast displayed the two wounds whence his life had flowed away. His beard, perfumed and spread out like a fan, as in his portraits, proved the care which this voluptuous king took of his face. His memory, revered by the people, protected him for the moment from profanation. The multitude, for two days, silently marched round this still popular corpse. Placed in the choir, at the foot of the altar, he received, dead, the respectful homage of the mutilators of royalty. Javogues, a representative of the people, was indignant at this posthumous superstition. He endeavoured to prove to the people, in a few words, that this king, brave and amorous, had rather been the seducer than the friend of his people. "He deceived," said Javogues, "God, his mistresses, and his people: let him not deceive posterity and your justice!" They flung the carcase of Henry IV. into the common fosse.

His sons and grandsons, Louis XIII. and XIV., followed. Louis XIII. was but a mummy. Louis XIV., a black indistinguishable mass of aromatics. The man disappeared, after his death, in his perfumes, as, during his life, in his pride. The vault of the Bourbons rendered up its dead—queens, dauphinesses, princesses, were carried away in armsful by the workmen, and cast into the trench. Louis XV. came last out of the tomb: the infection of his reign seemed to issue from his sepulchre. They were obliged to burn a mass of gunpowder to dissipate the mephitic odour of the corpse of this prince, whose scandalous life had degraded royalty.

In the vault of Charles, they found, beside Charles V., a hand of justice and a golden crown, and spindles and marriage-rings in the coffin of Jeanne de Bourbon his wife.

The vault of the Valois was empty, and the just hate of the people sought Louis XI. in vain. He had been buried in one of the sanctuaries of the Virgin, whom he had so often invoked, even to aid in his crimes.

Turenne's body, mutilated by a ball, was venerated by the people; and it was secretly removed, and for nine years preserved in the lofts of the Cabinet of Natural History in the Jardin des Plantes, amongst the stuffed remains of animals. The military tomb of the Invalids was rendered to this hero by the hands of a fellow-soldier. Duguesclin, Suger, Vendôme,—heroes, abbés, ministers of the monarchy, were cast headlong into the earth, which confounded their recollections of glory with the recollections of servitude.

Dagobert I., and his wife Matilde, had reposed in the same sepulchre for twelve centuries. Matilde's skeleton wanted the head, like the skeletons of several other queens. King

John closed up the file of this mournful procession of the dead. They found one spoil was wanting. It was that of a young princess, daughter of Louis XV., who had fled into a nunnery to avoid the scandals of the throne, and had died there under the Carmelite's habit. The vengeance of the Revolution went to seek this virgin's body, even in the tomb of the cloister, whither she had escaped from the grandeurs of life. Her coffin was brought to St. Denis, in order that it might be made to undergo the penalty of exhumation and exposure. No relic was spared. Nothing that had been royal was judged innocent. Brutal instinct revealed in the Revolution the desire to repudiate all the past of France. It sought to tear out every page in history, and to date all from the Republic.

## BOOK LIII.

I. Paris was not alone a prey to these devastations and this rage. The representatives of the Convention and the agents of the Commune traversed the whole surface of France. Carrier, at Nantes, endeavoured to surpass in executions the number and ferocity of those of Collot d'Herbois at Lyons. Carrier sought in the mythology of the primitive Christians and in the depravation of the Roman empire, executions to renew and refinements of death to surpass. He invented tortures and obscenities to season to his imagination the blood with which he was satiated. The Convention turned away their eyes. Nantes was a field of carnage, where every thing was permitted, as in the fury of combat. The passage of the Loire by the Vendeans, the insurrection of the nobles, the priests, and the peasants, the pretended complicity of the inhabitants of Nantes, had given to Carrier an entire people to execute.

This man was not one of opinion, but of depraved instincts. He had no idea but that of fury. Murder was his philosophy, blood all his sensuality. Carrier was born in those mountains of Auvergne where the men are strong, hardy, and wild as their climate. A population isolated by its race and its manners, in the centre of France, which seems to have in its fibres some portion of the fire and iron of its mines and volcanoes. Carrier, born in a village, sent to Aurillac to study as a lawyer, hardened by the practice of that subaltern chicanery, which closes the heart and sours the speech of litigious men, had become a declaimer and agitator of his country. They chose him, from his energy of purpose and ferocity of soul, to send him to the Convention. They thought they discerned in him an invincible soldier of the Revolution; he was but an executioner. He was then upwards of forty years of age. Without talent in the Convention, he had never spoken but vociferously. The most extreme measures, and amongst others the establishment of a revolutionary tribunal, had wrung from him some phrases of approbation. La Montagne had thought proper to carry terror into the disturbed provinces. They sent him to Nantes, to animate the republican army by his patriotism. He had been cowardly in combat, terrible in vengeance. After the rout of the royalist army, he had established at Nantes, not his tribunal, but his butchery. More than eight thousand victims had already been shot in the depôts, consisting of prisoners, sick, and women and children, whom the fugitive army left upon their march. This was little for Carrier. He presented himself with naked sabre in hand, to the popular society of Nantes; he harangued the club; he abused its sloth; he pointed out to it the merchants and rich people as the worst kind of aristocracy, and demanded five hundred citizens. He wrote to General Haxo, that the intention of the Convention was to depopulate and burn the country. He formed, under the name of the Company of Marat, a band of stipendiaries, paid at ten francs per day, to be the guards of his person and the executors of his orders. He shut himself up, like Tiberius at Caprea, in a country villa in the faubourg of Nantes, and made himself inaccessible to increase fright by mystery. He allowed no one to approach him but his satellites. He selected, amongst the most abject and half-starved men of the refuse of Nantes, the members of the Revolutionary Committees, and of the military commission, charged to legalise his atrocities, by an appearance of judgment.

A person named Lambertye, created by him adjutant-general, was his instrument. Lambertye carried his orders to the military commission, commanded the troops, enrolled the executioners, executed murders *en masse*, and partitioned the spoils. Not content with having caused eighty victims to be shot at one time without judgment, Carrier gave an order to the president of the military commission to deliver up the prisons and the depôts to Lambertye, to execute therein his nocturnal slaughter. The Company of Marat and the detachments of troops in garrison at Nantes, directed by Lambertye, thus emptied the prisons, while civil agents of the proconsul filled them by their denunciations.

II. The town and the department were no longer peopled but by murderers and by victims. Pillage served as incitement to murder. Murder absolved theft; commerce was suppressed, the merchants imprisoned, property sequestrated. Every movement of life was at a stand still. Residence was a sin, flight a crime, wealth a denunciation. All the principal citizens, republicans or royalists, were crammed into the dungeons. The blood-hounds of Carrier, and the satellites of Lambertye, brought the suspected in flocks from the towns and neighbouring counties into the depôts of Nantes. A single one of these depôts contained fifteen hundred women and children, without beds, without straw, without fire, and without covering, plunged into their infection, and sometimes abandoned for two days without nourishment. These human shambles were only emptied by fusillades. The citizens redeemed their life only by their fortunes,—women by their prostitution. Those who refused these infamous compliances were sent, even when pregnant, to execution. A great number of Vendean women, who had followed their husbands from beyond the Loire, and who were gathered together in the fields, were shot with the infants which they were about to bring into the world. The executioners called this striking royalism in the germ!

Seven hundred priests suffered martyrdom; some for their faith, others for their opinion,—all for their dress. The phantoms of judgments were too tardy and too multiplied in the eyes of Carrier. The tribunal commenced murmuring at its own servility. Carrier called the suspected members to him, loaded them with invectives, and even blows, brandished his sabre before their eyes, and demanded from them the heads which were marked out, or their own. His executioners trembled, and were secretly indignant at him. He felt that his instrument of murder was worn out,—he invented a new one.

The parricide Nero, drowning Agrippina in a sunken galley, to impute his crime to the sea, furnished to one of the seids of Carrier an idea which he adopted. Death by fire and sword made a noise, scattered blood, and left bodies to be buried and be counted. The silent water of the Loire was dumb, and would render no account. The bottom of the sea alone would know the number of victims. Carrier caused mariners to be brought, as pitiless as himself. He ordered them, without much mystery, to pierce plug-holes in a certain number of decked vessels, so as to sink them, with their living cargoes, in parts of the river which he should order, under pretext of transporting the prisoners from one depôt to another. One of these mariners asking him for a written order; "Am I not a representative?" answered Carrier. "Ought you not to have confidence in me for the labours I command you? Not so much mystery," added he; "you must throw these fifty priests into the water when you are in the middle of the current."

III. These orders were at first executed secretly and under the colour of accidents of navigation. But soon these naval executions, of which the waves of the Loire bore witness even to its mouth, became a spectacle for Carrier, and for his courtiers. He furnished a galley of pleasure, of which he made a present to his accomplice Lambertye, under pretext of watching the banks of the river. This vessel, adorned with all the delicacies of furniture, provided with all the wines and all the necessaries of feasting, became the most general theatre of these executions. Carrier embarked therein, sometimes himself with his executioners and his courtesans, to make trips upon the water. Whilst he yielded himself up to the joys of wine and love on deck, his victims, enclosed in the hold, saw, at a given signal, the valves open, and the waves of the Loire swallow them up. A stifled groaning announced to the crew that hundreds of lives had just breathed their last under their feet. They continued their orgies upon this floating sepulchre.

Sometimes Carrier, Lambertye, and their accomplices rejoiced in the cruel pleasure of this spectacle of agony. They caused victims of either sex in couples to mount upon the deck. Stripped of their garments, they bound them, face to face, one to the other,—a priest with a nun, a young man with a young girl,—they suspended them thus naked and interlaced by a cord passed under the shoulders through a block of the vessel; they sported, with horrible sarcasms on this parody of marriage in death, and then flung the victims into the river. This cannibal sport was termed "republican marriages."

These drownings of Nantes lasted many months. Entire villages perished *en masse* in military executions, the authors and executors of which themselves thus recounted the slaughter:—"We saw the volunteers, conformably to the orders of their chiefs, throw children from hand to hand, make them fly from bayonet to bayonet, burn the houses, rip up the bellies of the pregnant women, and burn children of fourteen years old." These murders did not yet satisfy Carrier. Madness bewildered his reason, his words, and his actions; but his madness was still sanguinary. The people of Nantes, witnesses and victims of this fury, seeing the Convention mute, dared not accuse as madness those acts which the satellites of this proconsul called patriotism. The slightest murmur was imputed to crime. Carrier, having learned that some secret denunciations had been sent to the Committee of Public Safety, caused two hundred of the principal merchants in Nantes to be arrested, buried them in dungeons, and afterwards caused them to be slowly dragged attached in couples, to Paris. A young commissioner of public instruction, son of a representative named Juvon, was sent to Nantes by Robespierre to investigate the crimes of Carrier. He informed Robespierre of the excesses by which Carrier dishonoured terror itself. Carrier was recalled. But La Montagne dared not disavow him or defame him. This was one of those wrongs most justly imputed as a reproach to Robespierre, allowing Carrier to escape with impunity. Not to avenge humanity of these illegal acts, was to declare himself either too weak to punish them, or proscriber sufficient to accept them.

IV. Joseph Lebon decimated, at Arras and at Cambray, the departments of the North and of the Pas de Calais. This man is an example of the phrenzy which seized some weak heads in the great oscillations of opinion. Times have their crimes as well as men. Blood is as contagious as air. The fever of revolutions has its delirium. Lebon proved it, and manifested it in all its accesses, during the short phases of a life of thirty years. In a period of quiet, he had acquired the name of a man of worth; in darker days, he left the renown of a pitiless proscriber.

Born at Arras, a compatriot of Robespierre, Lebon had entered into the order of the Oratory, the nursery for men who were destined to public tuition. Rejected from the rule of this order, Lebon became curate of Vernois, near Beaune, at the commencement of the Revolution. His regular piety, his manners, and his feeling for human misery made Lebon, at this period, the model of priests. The philanthropic doctrines of the Revolution mingled themselves in his mind with the spirit of liberty, of equality, and of the charity of Christianity. He believed he perceived the torch of political truth to be enlightened by the age at the torch of divine faith. He was impassioned with zeal and hope for this religion of the people, so similar to the religion of Christ. His faith itself incited him against his faith. He separated himself from Rome to unite himself to the constitutional church. When philosophy repudiated this schismatic church, Lebon repudiated it in his turn. He married. He returned to his country. The pledge he had given to the Revolution caused it to elevate him to public employ. The ascendency of Robespierre and of Saint-Just, at Arras, brought him to the Convention. The Committee of Public Safety did not think they could confide to a more trustworthy man the mission of watching over and quelling the contra-revolutionary plots of those departments in the neighbourhood of the frontiers, submissive to the priests, and wrought upon by the conspiracies of Dumouriez. Lebon there, at first, showed himself indulgent, patient, and just. He slackened his hand to put down, without striking, the enemies of the Revolution and the suspected. Denounced by the Jacobins on account of his moderation, the Committee of Public Safety recalled him to Paris to reprimand him for his weakness.

Whether it were that the tone of this reprimand had caused the terror which he was ordered to carry to Arras to penetrate into his own soul, or whether the fire of civic fury had ignited him, he returned, at any rate, another man into the north. The empty prisons at his voice were filled. He named, for judges and juries, the most ferocious republicans of the clubs. He dictated the sentences. He paraded the guillotine from town to town. He honoured the executioner as the chief magistrate of liberty. He caused him to dine publicly at his table, as if to reinstate death. Nobles, priests, parents of emigrants, citizens, farmers, servants, women, old men, and children who had not even attained the age of crime, and strangers who knew not even how to read the laws of the country—he mingled all in the arrests which he commanded his assassins to execute, and which execution he himself watched over. Blood, of which he had had a horror, became as water in his eyes. He was present, from a raised balcony, on a level with the guillotine, at the execution of the condemned. He endeavoured to cause his wife to view with less horror the death of the enemies of the people. He seemed to repent of his ancient humanity as of a weakness. The only crime, in his eyes, was pity for the contra-revolutionists, and for the priests, the companions of his prior faith. He made triumphal entries into the cities, preceded by the instrument of execution, and accompanied by judges, denunciators, and executioners. He insulted and dismissed the authorities. He replaced them with denunciators. He caused to be inscribed over his door—"Those who shall enter here to solicit the liberty of the *détenus*, shall not issue forth but to take their place." He stripped the suspected of their wealth, and the condemned women of their jewels, and confiscated these legacies of the scaffold to the profit of the republic. He drove from popular society those women whose modesty prevented them from taking part in the patriotic dances ordered, under pain of imprisonment. He had them exposed, upon a platform, to the interrogations and yells of the populace. He had thus raised upon this footstool of infamy a young girl of seventeen, his cousin, who had refused to dance in these civic choirs. He insulted her with his own tongue, and threatened to make her expiate her refusal in the dungeon. He searched for, and struck with his own hand, young girls and women who read aristocratic books. He condemned and guillotined whole families, and laid low twenty heads at once. He pursued vengeance beyond the scaffold.

V. In the south the proconsul, Maignet, born, like Carrier, in the mountains of Auvergne, yielded to the sanguinary example of the assassins of Avignon. He burned, by order of the Committee of Public Safety, the little town of *Bedouin*, signalised as a focus of royalty, after having expelled the inhabitants. He instigated the creation of a popular commission at Orange, to purge the south. Ten thousand victims fell much less under the axe of the republic, than under the vengeance of their own personal enemies. In this climate of fire, all ideas are passions—all passions crimes.

VI. Blood appeared more crimson when contrasted with this feeling for family and these domestic details. The system which these men adopted had degraded them to impassibility. As for the rest, crimes called reaction into the departments. Royalists, *modérés*, patriots — all used the same weapons. Opinions became, for all, personal hatreds and assassinations. Men in masks having been introduced, at night, into the country-house of one of the principal republicans of Avignon, chained his servants, his wife, and his daughters, dragged him into his cellar, and shot him under the eyes of his own son, whom they forced to hold a lamp to light their aim. Maignet seized this occasion to arrest all the relations of emigrants, and all women suspected of attachment to the proscribed. The south, pressed by a colony of Montagnards, and by the revolutionary commission of Orange, dared no longer act under the hand of the Convention.

At Bordeaux, seven hundred and fifty heads of the federalists had already rolled under the iron of the guillotine. The triumvirate of Isabeau, of Baudot, and of Tallien pacified La Gironde. Isabeau, an ancient orator, like Fouché, a man of vigour, and not of carriage; Baudot, the deputy of Saône-et-Loire, urging republican zeal to a fever, but not to cruelty; Tallien, young, handsome, and intoxicated with his reputation, proud of the friendship of Danton, sometimes terrible and sometimes indulgent, causing some to expect vengeance and others pity — Tallien thought he felt himself destined to great things. He governed Bordeaux as a sovereign of a conquered province, rather than as a delegate of a popular democracy. He desired to make himself feared and adored at the same time. The son of a father nourished in the domesticity of an illustrious family, educated himself by the patronage of this family, Tallien brought into the republic the tastes, the elegances, the pride, and also the corruptions of aristocracy.

VII. At the moment when Tallien arrived at Bordeaux, a young Spanish woman, of striking beauty, of tender feelings, and of passionate imagination was detained there, in her route towards Spain, by the arrest of her husband. She called herself then Madame de Fontenay. She was the daughter of the Count de Cabarrus. The count of Cabarrus, French by origin, and established in Spain, had risen, by his genius for finance, to the highest employs in the monarchy under the reign of Charles III. Born at Madrid, of a Valencian mother, whom Cabarrus had elevated, the fire of the south, the languor of the north, and the grace of France united in her person, made her a living statue of the beauty of all these climates. She was one of those women whose charms are power, and of whom nature avails herself, as of Cleopatra or of Theodora, to enslave those who enslave the world, and to tyrannise over the soul of tyrants. The persecutions to which her father had submitted at Madrid, for the price of his services, had taught the young Spaniard from her infancy to detest despotism and adore liberty. French by origin, she had become so, in heart, from patriotism. The republic appeared to her as the Nemesis of kings, the providence of nations, and the restoration of nature and of truth.

At the theatres, at the reviews, in the popular societies, in *fêtes*, and in public ceremonies the people of Bordeaux saw her enthusiasm by her presence, by her costume, and by her applause. They thought they beheld in her the female genius of the republic. But Madame de Fontenay had a horror of blood. She could not resist a tear. She believed generosity to be the excuse of power. The necessity of conquering a greater popularity, in order to turn it to the advantage of mercy, induced her to appear sometimes in the clubs, and to speak. Clothed in a riding habit, her hair covered with a hat and tri-coloured plume, she made many republican discourses. The intoxication of the people resembled love.

The name of Tallien then made Bordeaux tremble. They spoke of the representative of the people as of an implacable man. She felt herself courageous enough to brave him, seducing enough to soften him. The fame of ancient females who had subjected proscribers, to wrest victims from them, induced her; the ambition of ruling over one of the men who, at this moment ruled the republic, intoxicated her.

She conquered the representative by her first look. Tallien, under whom all bent, bowed at her feet. She usurped, in his soul, the place of the republic. He no longer desired power but to allow her to partake it; greatness, but to raise her to it; glory, but to cover her with it. As all men do, with whom passion amounts to delirium, he gloried in his weakness. He rejoiced in the publicity of his amour. He displayed it with pride before the people, with insolence before his colleagues; whilst the prisons were gorged with captives, while the emissaries of the representatives tracked the suspected in the fields, and blood flowed in torrents upon the scaffold, Tallien, intoxicated with his passion for Doña Theresa, paraded her in splendid equipages, to the delight of Bordeaux. Clothed in the light drapery of the Greek statues, which displayed transparently the beauty of her form, a spear in her hand, and the other gracefully leant upon the shoulder of the proconsul, Doña Theresa affected the attitude of the goddess of liberty.

But she rejoiced more in being secretly the divinity of pardon. This woman held in her hand the heart of him who controlled life and death; she was supplicated and adored as the providence of the persecuted. The executions were soon confined to only those men pointed out by the Committee of Public Safety as dangerous to the republic. The judges were milder from the example of the representative. The love of a woman transformed terror: Bordeaux forgot its seven hundred victims. The enthusiastic temper of the Bordelais smiled at this Oriental proconsulship of Tallien. Robespierre was provoked at it, but did not insist upon his recall to Paris. He loved him better as a satrap at Bordeaux than as a conspirator in the Convention. He spoke of Tallien with contempt. "These men," said he, "are fit only to revive vice. They inoculate the people with the bad manners of the aristocracy. But patience — we will deliver the people from their corrupters, as we have delivered them from their tyrants."

VIII. Robespierre kept his eye on these proconsuls. On the return of Fouché from his mission in the south, he broke out in reproaches against the cruelty of the Conventionalist. "Does he believe then," said he, speaking of Fouché, "that the blade of the republic is a sceptre, and that it will not recoil upon those who hold it?" Fouché made vain endeavours to become reconciled to Robespierre. Robespierre sent his brother on a mission to Vesoul and to Besançon. This young man only availed himself of the high power which his name bestowed upon him to moderate his colleagues, repress executions, and to open the prisons. After a discourse of clemency pronounced in the popular society of Vesoul, he restored liberty to eight hundred *détenus*. This indulgence was not slow in bringing down scandal on his colleague Bernard de Saintes. The young representative pursued his mission of clemency. The president of the club of Besançon, noble by birth, having spoken to him one day in the assembly of the illustriousness of his family called to high destiny; "The services which my brother has rendered to the Revolution," replied the younger Robespierre, "are all personal. The love of the people has been the reward of them. I have nothing to claim for myself."

Surrounded by the relatives of the *détenus*, who represented to him the injustice and tyranny of his colleagues, but powerless beyond the limits of the Haute Saône, the younger Robespierre promised them to bear their complaints to the Convention, and to bring back justice. "I shall return here with the olive-branch in my hand, or I will die for you," said he to them; "for I go to defend my head and that of your relatives at the same time." This exalted young man received, with the respect of a son, the oracles and confidence of his brother. His eloquence was monotonous, cold, weak, and without imagination. It was evident that he drew his inspirations from a system rather than from his sentiments.

# BOOK LIV.

I. During the early months of 1794, Saint-Just and Lebas, sometimes in unison, at others separated, both the intimate confidants of Robespierre, ran from the army of the North to the army of the Rhine, and from Lille to Strasburg, to reorganise the armies, watch the generals, and to stimulate and moderate the public mind in the threatened departments. Saint-Just carried not only the nerve of an inflexible will into the tribunals, but displayed on the field of battle the impetuosity of his youth, and the example of an intrepidity which astonished the very soldiery. He was no more sparing of his blood than of his renown.

The young representative had several horses killed under him. He only rested from the intoxication of war to condemn himself to watchings and to the assiduous toil of an organiser. He did not permit himself any of those relaxations of which his youth might have rendered him desirous. He seemed to recognise no other luxury than the triumph of his cause. This proconsul of twenty-four years, master of the life of thousands of citizens, and of the fortune of as many families, who beheld at his feet the wives and daughters of the *détenus*, displayed the austerity of a Scipio. He wrote from the midst of the camp letters to the sister of Lebas, which breathed the purest attachment. Terrible in combat, pitiless in council, he respected in himself the Revolution, as a dogma of which he was not permitted to sacrifice any thing to humane sentiments. Equally implacable towards those who stained the republic as towards those who betrayed it, he sent to the guillotine the president of the revolutionary tribunal of Strasburg, who had imitated and equalled the ferocity of Lebon in Alsace. The mission of Saint-Just to Strasburg saved thousands of heads.

II. Lebas, his friend, and almost every where his colleague, had been the schoolfellow of Robespierre. He had devoted himself, by a double worship, to his principles as a revolutionist, and to his person as a friend. Born at Frévent, in the environs of Arras, the country of Robespierre, his oratorical talents, displayed in the popular cause, had carried Lebas into the Convention. He there followed the thought of Robespierre, as the fixed star of his opinions. Honest, modest, and silent, without other ambition than that of serving the ideas of his master, he believed in virtue as in the infallibility of Robespierre. He had remitted his conscience and his votes to his hands; connexions of familiarity, and almost of relationship, augmented still more the unity of opinion. Lebas, introduced by Robespierre into the house of Duplay, had become the table companion of this family. He was betrothed to the youngest daughter of Duplay. The hand which drew the sabre at the head of our battalions, and which signed the imprisonment or liberty of so many proscribed, wrote to this female, dreaming of domestic happiness under the same roof where Robespierre dreamt of his blood-stained theories. "When shall I be able to place the seal to a union to which I attach the happiness of my life?" said Lebas to his affianced bride. "Oh! how sweet will be that moment when I again see you! What cruel sacrifices the country demands of me by these absences! But matters go on so badly, that deputies truly patriotic are required here. Yesterday I caused two generals to be arrested. In rendering to Paris all the services of which I am capable, I shall rejoice in the happiness of being near to you! We shall be united now! Tell Robespierre that my health cannot long submit to the rude life I lead here. Pardon me the brevity of my letters. It is now one o'clock in the morning. I am oppressed with fatigue. I go to sleep dreaming of you; when our carriage takes us up, and my colleague, Duquesnoy, overpowered by fatigue, ceases talking, or falls asleep, I dream of you. Every other idea, when I can tear my thoughts from public matters, troubles me. Now that my presence is not so necessary, might not Couthon have some deference for his young colleague? Might not Robespierre consider that I have already done enough to shorten the term of my sacrifice? Occupy yourself, my dear Elizabeth, with the arrangement of our future dwelling. I wrote yesterday in haste to Robespierre. I am satisfied with Saint-Just. He possesses talent and excellent qualities. Embrace all the family, and Robespierre is of the number. We never cease, Saint-Just and myself, to take the necessary measures for the triumph of our armies. We travel night and day, and exercise the most indefatigable surveillance. At the moment when he least expects us, such a general sees us arrive, and demand from him an account of his conduct. I am glad that you have no prejudice against Saint-Just. I have promised him a repast from your hand. He is an excellent man: I love him and esteem him every day more. The republic has not a more ardent or more intelligent defender."

Henriette was the sister of Lebas, beloved by Saint-Just. The attachment which Saint-Just evidenced towards Lebas was a reflection of that which he entertained for the sister of his colleague. But this young girl, who at the commencement returned Saint-Just the sentiment he experienced for her, having hesitated afterwards to give him her hand, Saint-Just attributed this estrangement to Lebas. He became cool towards his colleague. These two Conventionalists remained, nevertheless, both attached to Robespierre. This circumstance, it was said, was some months afterwards the motive of the absence of Saint-Just from the Committee of Public Safety — an absence which weakened the party of Robespierre, and caused his fall and his death. A disappointment in love thus went some way towards the catastrophe which dragged down Robespierre and the republic.

III. These interior details attest the simplicity of passions and interests which were in agitation around the master of the republic. Robespierre the younger, Saint-Just, Couthon, the Italian Buonarotti, Lebas, some poor and honest artisans, and some sectarians, fanaticised by democratic doctrines, composed all the court of Robespierre. The house of a workman continued to be his palace. It was the school of a philosopher in lieu of the circle of a dictator. But this philosopher had an intractable people for his disciples, and that people had the sword in their hands. The populace of Paris, once unchained, intimidated the true body of them, and the scum spread. Liberty was a scandal of the republicans themselves. This was not the reign, but the saturnalia of the republic.

Hébert and Chaumette daily excited this excess more and more; the one in his pages of *Père Duchesne*, the other in his discourses. Philosophers of Diderot's schools, these two men stirred up the vilest passions of the human heart. They professed atheism. The perpetual dialogue which they held with the people, was seasoned by oaths and obscene expressions, which are to the tongue of men what ordure is to the sight and smell. They infected the vocabulary of the republic. Cynicism and ferocity are allied. Ferocity is the cynicism of the heart. The vulgar horde were proud to see their folly raised to the dignity of political language. This parody made them laugh as if at a masquerade of words. Their native tongue had lost all modesty. Its licence no longer made it blush. It displayed itself like a prostitute.

IV. The women of the people had been the first to applaud the shamelessness of Hébert. Mirabeau had incited them by one word pronounced at Versailles, on the evening of the days of the 5th and 6th of October. "If the women do not mix in it," he said in a whisper to the emissaries of the Parisian insurrection, "there will be nothing done." He knew that the fury of women, once inflamed, rises to excess, and to profanations which surpass the audacity of men. The women of Paris, running at the head of the republican bands of the capital, had in effect first violated the palace of the king, brandished the poignard over the bed of the queen, and carried to Paris on the end of their pikes the heads of the massacred body guards. Théroigne de Mericourt and her bands had marched to the assault of the Tuileries on the 20th of June and the 10th of August. Terrible during the combat, cruel after victory, they had assassinated the vanquished, spilt their blood, and mutilated their bodies. The Revolution, its agitations, its days, its sentences, and its executions had become for these furies a spectacle as necessary as the combats of the gladiators were to the corrupted female patricians of Rome. Ashamed of being excluded from the clubs of men, these women had founded at first, under the name of fraternal societies, — afterwards under that of societies of republican and revolutionary women,—clubs of their own sex. There were, by the place of their meeting, even clubs of children from twelve to fourteen years of age, called "*Red Children*," the baptism of blood upon the heads of these precocious republicans. These societies of women had their orators. The Commune of Paris, on the report of Chaumette, had decreed that these heroines of the great days of the Revolution should have an honourable place in the civic ceremonies, and that they should be preceded by a banner bearing this inscription: "*Elles ont balayé les tyrans devant elles.*" (They have swept the tyrants before them.) "They shall assist in the national fêtes," said the decree of the Commune, "with their husbands and their children, and they shall knit there." From thence originated the name of *Tricoteuses* (Knitters) of Robespierre, a name which defamed that sign of handiwork and of the domestic hearth. Every day, detachments of these mercenaries, paid by the Commune, distributed themselves about the entrances of the tribunal, upon the route of the tumbrils, and upon the steps of the guillotine — to greet death, to insult the victims, and to glut their eyes with blood. Antiquity had paid mourners, the Commune had stipendiary furies.

V. The fraternal society of women held its sittings in a hall adjacent to that of the Jacobins. This union was composed of educated women, who discussed with more decency the social questions analogous to their sex,—such as marriage, maternity, the education of children, the institutions of relief, and the assistance of humanity. They were the philosophers of their sex. Robespierre was their oracle and their idol. The Utopian and vague character of its institutions was conformable to the genius of women, more adapted to dream of the social happiness than to form the mechanism of societies. The Revolutionary Society sat at Saint Eustache. It was composed of abandoned women, adventurers of their sex, recruited for vice, either in the depths of misery, or in the hovels of debauchery. The scandal of their meetings, the tumult of their motions, the caprice of their eloquence, and the audacity of their petitions annoyed the Committee of Public Safety. These women had dictated laws under pretext of bestowing their counsel upon the Convention. It was evident that their acts were dictated to them by the agitators of the Commune and of the Cordeliers. They were the advanced guard of a new 31st of May. Particularly affiliated to the club of the Cordeliers, abandoned, since the eclipse of Danton, to the most unbridled demagogues, they founded their agrarian doctrines upon the club of *Enragés*. These three clubs were to the Commune what the Jacobins were to the Convention,—one while its whip, at another its bridle, and sometimes its sword. Hébert was their Robespierre, Chaumette was their Danton.

VI. A young, beautiful, and eloquent woman, if one can bestow this epithet on such disordered inspiration of the soul, presided over this last club. She was named Rose Lacombe. A daughter without a mother, born by chance in the *coulisses* of a provincial theatre, she had grown up on the minor boards. Life for her had been but a sorry part, speech but perpetual declamation. Of an excitable and turbulent nature, the revolutionary enthusiasm had easily borne her off in its whirlwind. Noticed, admired, and applauded in the first agitations of Paris, this grand scene of the people had disgusted her with every thing else. Like Collot d'Herbois, she had passed with one step from the theatre to the tribune, and, like him, she conveyed into the real tragedies of the republic the accents and gestures of her first profession. The people like these declamatory natures —the gigantic appears to them sublime. More alive to noise than truth, whatever counterfeits nature seems to them to surpass it. Rose Lacombe had a powerful ascendency over the Commune. She scolded the deputies. Bazire, Chabot bent before her; Robespierre alone, amongst the leaders of public opinion, closed his door against her. She caused the prisons to open—denounced or pardoned—procured all imprisonments and pardons. Easily subdued by tears, she interceded frequently for the accused.

Love had surprised her in the dungeons she visited. Struck by the beauty of a young prisoner, nephew of the mayor of Toulouse, and imprisoned with his uncle, Rose Lacombe had tried everything to save her *protégé*. She liberally abused the Convention. Bazire and Chabot denounced her to the Cordeliers as an *intriguante*, who sought to corrupt patriotism. "She is dangerous because she is eloquent and handsome," said Bazire. "She has threatened me, if I did not set the mayor of Toulouse at liberty," said Chabot. "She has confessed to me that it was not this magistrate, but his nephew who had interested her heart. I, who am accused of allowing myself to be persuaded by women, have resisted her. It is because I love the women that I will not allow them to corrupt and calumniate virtue! They have even dared to attack Robespierre." At these words Rose Lacombe rose in the tribune, and demanded leave to speak. The club was in a ferment. Some wished she should be heard, and others demanded that she should be turned out. The president put on his hat. The club decided that an address should be sent to the Committee of General Safety, demanding the purification of the society of revolutionary women. The Convention did not dare to dissolve them.

VII. Robespierre expressed his open and loud indignation at these orgies of opinion, in which, under pretext of giving an impulse to patriotism, nature was perverted. Chaumette dreaded Robespierre's anger, and sought to appease it. He prepared a theatrical display, in which he should affect the austerity of the tribune of public conduct against the very excesses he had himself provoked. Towards the end of January a column of revolutionary women, rallied and led by Rose Lacombe, wearing the *bonnet rouge*, and displaying their persons, forced an entrance into the council of the Commune, and interrupted the sitting by their petitions and cries. Murmurs of indignation (arranged beforehand) were heard in the Assembly. "Citizens," exclaimed Chaumette, "you are doing a great act of reason by these murmurs. The entrance to the chamber where the magistrates of the people sit should be interdicted to those who outrage the nation." "No," said another member, "the law permits women to enter." "Let the law be read," replied Chaumette. "The law commands respect to public decency, and causes it to be respected; but here I see it despised. How long shall women be allowed to abjure their sex, abandon their household duties and the cradle of their children to come into public places, in the tribune of orators, the bar of the senate, the ranks of our armies, — usurping those rights which nature has reserved for men? To whom, then, has nature assigned domestic duties? Has she made us nurses? Has she softened our muscles to render us fitted for the occupations of the house and the household? No! — she has said to man, be man; to woman, be woman, and be the divinity of the sanctuary of home! Imprudent women, who seek to become men, have you not already all you should have? You control all our senses; your despotism is that of love, and consequently that of nature." At these words the women took off their *bonnets rouges*. "Recollect," continued Chaumette, "those perverse women who have so greatly excited the republic — that haughty wife of a perfidious husband, the citizeness Roland, who believed herself capable of governing the nation, and hastened on to her own ruin — that man-woman, the impudent Olympe de Gouges, who founded the first of the 'societies of women,' and went to death for her crimes! Women are not anything but when men are nothing. Look at Jeanne-d'Arc, who was great only because Charles VII. was less than a man!"

The women retired, apparently convinced by Chaumette's appeal. Rose Lacombe did not, however, cease (instigated by Hébert) to stir up the very dregs of her sex. Groups of women, dressed in red trowsers, with cockades in their hair, insulted and assaulted, in public places, modest young females whom they surprised without the exterior signs of patriotism.

Amar, set on by Robespierre, addressed the Convention on this subject. "I denounce to you," he said, "an assemblage of more than 6000 women, *soi-disant* Jacobins, and members of a pretended revolutionary society. Nature, by her difference of strength and conformation, has assigned to them other duties. Modesty, which forbids their publicity, lays down as law that they shall remain in the bosoms of their families." The Convention adopted these principles, and closed the female clubs; and Rose Lacombe returned to the obscurity and the dregs of society whence the revolutionary furor had for the moment drawn her. Hébert and his party were disarmed with these bands, which they had incited to meetings, at first supplicatory, and then imperious, towards the Convention.

VIII. Hébert's party in the Commune openly aspired to continue and surpass the party of Marat. He began to disturb the Committee of Public Safety, and to weary Robespierre and Danton. Hébert, master of the Commune through Pache, Payan, and Chaumette; master of the people through the subaltern leaders of the riots; master of the revolutionary army through Ronsin; master of the club of Cordeliers by its new orators, amongst whom were young Vincent, secretary general of the minister of war; in fine, master of the most tumultuous risings of the multitude through his journal, the *Père Duchesne*, in which he kept up the perpetual fire of sedition, attacked Robespierre cautiously — Danton openly. These two popular men undermined, Hébert relied on imposing his demagoguism on the Convention with the utmost facility. The ideal of this party was neither liberty nor country. It was the total subversion of all ideas, all religions, all decencies, all institutions on which social order had been hitherto based; the absolute and sanguinary tyranny of the people of Paris alone over all the rest of the nation; the decapitation *en masse* of all the noble, rich, lettered, moral classes, which had predominated by their rank, intelligence, or prejudices; the suppression of national representation; and finally, the establishment for all government of a dictatorship, absolute as the people and irresponsible as destiny.

Each of the principal members of this faction, Hébert, Chaumette, Vincent, Momoro, Ronsin, arrogated to himself, in his own mind, the chief magistracy. In the meanwhile, it had devolved on Pache the mayor, — an abstracted, mysterious, taciturn character, whose exterior had a terrible analogy with the avenging, implacable, and mute omnipotence which he sought to personify in himself.

The insatiable thirst of blood, which had not been glutted by five months of punishments, incessant riots against the rich and the merchants, the clamours against monopolists, the follies of a maximum ordered by the Convention, demolitions, exhumations, violations of sepulchres, the apostacies enforced on Gobel and his clergy under pain of death, the proscription of one hundred thousand priests, persecuted, imprisoned, martyrised for their faith, the profanation of churches, the parodies of religious worship, proclamations of atheism, the honours rendered to immorality, and then the obscene and sanguinary catechism which *Père Duchesne* each day cast in his pages to the people, — were symptoms which revealed to Robespierre and Danton the plans or deliriums of this faction. But, protected by the Commune, this faction was enabled to brave all. Danton, nearly always retired in his country-house near Sèvres, abandoned the tribune of the Cordeliers to his enemies, and his popularity to itself. He rarely appeared at the Jacobins, not, as in former days, to crush and carry all before him, but to justify himself and to complain. Danton confined himself to his defence against the bitings of Hébert and his pack, which was incessantly growling against him.

This impolitic set against Danton by Hébert's party, at the moment when this party desired to render Robespierre unpopular, had its origin in a rivalry between the journals of Hébert and Camille Desmoulins. The *Père Duchesne* went deeper into the mud than his rival, and never ceased splashing Desmoulins, who replied to Hébert in his pamphlets, in which insult was branded with a red-hot iron on the brows of his enemies.

IX. Camille Desmoulins, who had been mute since the death of the Girondists, now resumed his pen, and published some numbers (worthy of Tacitus and Aristophanes conjoined) against the excess of the Terror and Hébert's doctrines. He endeavoured to make crime ridiculous; but death does not laugh. The publication of these detached leaves was, like all that Camille did, a burst of anger and a secret caress of two great popular individuals. This was the origin.

One of the last evenings in the month of January, Danton, Souberbielle one of the jury of the revolutionary tribunal, and Camille Desmoulins came away from the Palais de Justice together. The day had been one of blood. Fifteen heads had that morning fallen on the Place de la Revolution; twenty-seven had been sentenced to death at the sitting; and amongst the number were the heads of some of the highest of the ancient magistracy of Paris. These three men, with dejected mien, and the heart deeply affected by the sinister impressions of the sight they had just witnessed, walked on in silence. The night (which gives force to reflections, and allows the secrets of the soul to escape,) was gloomy and dull. On reaching the Pont Neuf, Danton turned suddenly towards Souberbielle, and said, "Do you know that at the pace we are now going, there will speedily be no safety for any person? The best patriots are confounded heedlessly with traitors. Blood shed by generals on the field of battle does not spare them from spilling the rest on the scaffold. I am weary of living. Look! See there! the river seems to flow with blood!" "True," replied Souberbielle, "the sky is red; and there are many showers of blood behind those clouds! Those men had demanded inflexible judges, and now they only seek for complaisant executioners. When I refuse an innocent head to their knife, they say I have scruples of conscience. What can I do?" added Souberbielle, with dejection. "I am but an obscure patriot. Ah, if I were Danton!"

"Danton sleeps—be silent!" replied Robespierre's rival, "he will awake at the right moment. All this begins to excite horror in me. I am a man of the Revolution, and not a man of slaughter; but you," he added, addressing Camille Desmoulins, "why do you keep silence?" "I am weary of silence," was Camille's reply, "my hand weighs heavily, and I have sometimes the impulse to sharpen my pen into a dagger and stab these scoundrels. Let them beware! My ink is more indelible than their blood: it stains for immortality!" "Bravo, Camille!" rejoined Danton, "begin from to-morrow. You began the Revolution; be it you who shall now most strongly urge it. Be assured," he continued in his deepest tones, "this hand shall aid you. You know whether or not it be strong." The three friends separated at Danton's door.

Next day Camille Desmoulins had written the first number of the *Vieux Cordelier.* After having read it to Danton, Camille took it to Robespierre. He knew that an attack against the *Enragés* would not displease the master of the Jacobins, who secretly abhorred Hébert. There was a prudence concealed in the temerity of Camille Desmoulins, and adulation even in his courage. Robespierre, still undecided as to the plans of the Jacobins and the Montagne, neither approved nor blamed Camille Desmoulins. He guarded in his words the liberty he desired to guard in his acts. But the writer discerned the thought of Robespierre beneath his reserve, and understood that if his daring were not encouraged, at least it would be pardoned.

X. But if Robespierre hesitated to attack the Terror from fear of injuring or disarming the Committee of Public Safety, he did not hesitate to combat alone, and body to body, with those who depraved the Revolution, and desired to convert worship into atheism. More constant than ever at the Jacobins, in spite of the slow fever that consumed him, he alone restrained them in that declivity, down which the Commune and the Cordeliers sought to drag all headlong. He wished, for a long time, an occasion to wash his hands of the immoralities and impieties of Chaumette and Hébert, and the latter, emboldened by the feeling of a portion of the Mountain, was not long in offering this opportunity to Robespierre. He marched in procession through the Convention one of these assemblages of men and women, clad in the spoils of the churches. Next day he presented himself, in force, at the Jacobins, to renew the same scenes, and impel them forward. In his discourse he ventured to address plain allusions against their leader. "The policy of all tyrants," said Hébert, "is to divide, in order to reign. That of patriots is to rally, in order to crush tyrants. I have already warned you that certain intriguers have sought to set us against each other. Expressions of Robespierre against myself are quoted, and the question is daily asked why I am not arrested. I reply, are we again to have the Committee of Twelve? Yet I do not altogether despise these rumours. Every patriot owes it to himself to refute injurious reports against him. We must follow up rigorously the trials of the accomplices of Brissot. When we have judged the greatest criminal, we should judge his accomplices. When we have judged Capet, we should judge his whole race!"

Momoro then demanded the extermination of all the priests. On this motion Robespierre, who had watched his opportunity for calling Hébert to an account, which, he thought, might be delayed by this kind of call to concert on the part of this leader of the Commune, hastened to avail himself of it. "I had thought," he said, as he rose, "that Momoro would discuss the question presented by Hébert to the attention of the Assembly, but he has not even alluded to it. It is for us, then, to seek out the real causes of the ills which affect our country. Is it true that our most dangerous enemies are the impure remains of the race of our tyrants; those captives whose names still serve for rebels and foreign powers? I vote, in my heart, that the race of tyrants may disappear from the earth, but can I be blind to the situation of my country, even to the extent of believing that the death of Capet's sister will suffice to extinguish the various conspiracies that rend our country? Is it true that the principal cause of our evils is in fanaticism? Fanaticism which is expiring, if not dead! You say you fear the priests! yet they are abdicating their titles as rapidly as possible, exchanging them for those of municipals, administrators, and even presidents of popular societies. No; it is not fanaticism which should now be the main object of our disquietudes. Five years of a revolution which has struck the priests proves their impotency. I see but one mode of reviving it amongst us, and that is by affecting to believe in its force. Fanaticism is a ferocious and capricious animal. It fled before reason — run after it with loud clamour, and it will return to us.

"And what other effect can be produced by that exaggerated and officious zeal with which, for some time, it has been assailed? By what right do men, unknown until now in the career of the Revolution, seek, in these persecutions, the means of usurping a false popularity, to bring on false measures, and fling amongst us trouble and discord? By what right do they come to disturb the freedom of worship in the name of freedom, and to attack fanaticism by fresh fanaticism? By what right do they seek to degrade the solemn homage rendered to pure truth into ridiculous farces? Priests have been denounced for saying mass. They will continue to say it much longer if they are forbidden. He who seeks to preclude mass is more fanatic than he who says it.

"There are men who would go much farther, and who, under pretence of destroying superstition, seek to make a kind of religion of atheism itself. The National Convention abhors such a system. The Convention is not a bookmaker, an author of metaphysical systems: it is a body politic and popular, charged with making not only the rights, but the character, of the French people respected. It is not in vain that it has proclaimed the Declaration of the Rights of Man in presence of the Supreme Being! Atheism is aristocratic. The idea of a great Being which watches over oppressed innocence, and punishes triumphant crime, is every where acknowledged."

Applause followed from amongst the humble classes of the Jacobins.

Robespierre resumed: "The people, the suffering classes, applaud me. If I found censors here, it would be amongst the rich and the guilty. I have not for one day ceased to be attached from my infancy to the moral and political ideas I have just laid before you. If God had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent him. I speak," he continued, "in a tribune in which an insolent Girondist dared to impute to me as a crime that I had uttered the word Providence; and at what period? Why, when the heart, ulcerated by all crimes of which we were witnesses and victims, — when shedding bitter tears over a people eternally betrayed, eternally oppressed, — I sought to elevate myself above the scum of conspirators by whom I was environed, invoking against them heavenly vengeance in default of popular punishment. Ah! so long as tyrannies shall exist, where is the energetic and virtuous soul which would not appeal in secret from their sacrilegious triumph to that eternal justice which seems to have written in all hearts the sentence of death against all tyrants? It seems to me that the last martyr of liberty would breathe out his soul with a sweeter feeling reposing on this consoling idea. This is the sentiment of Europe and the universe: it is that of the French people. Do you not see the snare laid for you by the concealed enemies of the republic and the emissaries of foreign tyrants? The wretches would thus justify the gross calumnies whose impudence is recognised by all Europe, and estrange from you by prejudices and irreligious opinions those whom morality and a common interest would draw to the sublime and holy cause which we defend."

Robespierre demanded the expulsion of Proly, Dubuisson, and Pereyra. This was acceded to. Robespierre, listened to at first with astonishment, then with coldness, had overwhelmed Hébert and Chaumette in denouncing atheism. He had exhausted his strength in his daring, and his thunders in that eternal instinct of the human soul which gives evidence of a God. By asserting the Deity, Robespierre created for himself and the Revolution a conscience and a judge. Had he been a low scoundrel he would have sought to blind the people to this divine light, instead of rekindling it amongst them. In this harangue he staked his popularity against the profession of his faith.

Hébert's party, overcome on this occasion at the Jacobins, revenged itself in the Commune by acts of persecution still more intolerant against the liberty of worship. Danton spoke in the Convention against these persecutions; but he spoke like a politician who argues for a sacred custom of a people, and not like a philosopher who is the first to adore the loftiest idea of the human mind. This accordance, however, in an inculpation against Hébert and Chaumette, for a moment brought Robespierre and Danton again together.

XI. The purifications continued in the Jacobins, as it had been decided in the preceding meeting. Every member, cited in turns before the tribune, had to submit to a public examination of his opinions and of his life. At the moment Danton appeared to render an account of his actions, a murmur of animadversion ran through the hall. The echo of his blighted renown reached him even in the tribune. Danton was for a moment disturbed, afterwards regaining the assurance of despair, and arming himself with the imperturbability of virtue which he had not, "I have heard murmurs," said he. "Already grave denunciations have circulated against me. I demand to justify myself before the people. I summon all those who have conceived suspicions against me to determine their accusations, for I desire to answer them publicly. I experienced a kind of ill-favour on appearing in the tribune. Have I then lost those features which characterise the countenance of a free man? Am I no longer that same Danton who was side to side with you in every moment of crisis? Am I no longer he whom you have so often embraced as your friend, and who ought to die with you? I have been one of the most intrepid defenders of Marat. I invoke the shade of the friend of the people! You will be astonished, when I let you know my private conduct, to see that the colossal fortune which my enemies attribute to me, reduces itself to the small portion of wealth which I have always possessed. I defy the malevolent to furnish the proof of any crime against me. All their efforts will be unable to shake me. I desire to remain of and amongst the people. You shall judge me in their presence. I shall not tear out one page more of my history than you shall tear out of yours, which ought to immortalise the registers of liberty."

After this exordium, which broke the so long closed seal of his soul, Danton abandoned himself to an improvisation so full and so rapid that the pen of the auditors was incompetent to follow and note it down. He passed his life in review, and made himself a pedestal of his revolutionary acts, from which he defied his calumniators to shake him. He finished by demanding the nomination of twelve commissioners to examine his conduct. Silence accorded this request. It was evident that the people, moved by his eloquence, trusted more to his genius than to his conscience. Robespierre could with one word precipitate or raise Danton. He felt that he required this man to counterbalance the popularity of Hébert. He desired, in saving him, to show that he could destroy him. He ascended the tribune, not with that studied manner which he ordinarily adopted when he desired to speak, but with the precipitation of a man who is about to parry a blow already levelled at him. "Danton," said he, apostrophising him in a severe tone, "you demand that the accusations brought against you should be determined. No one speaks. Well, then, I am about to do it,—I. Danton, you are accused of having emigrated. It is said that you passed into Switzerland, and that your malady was feigned to conceal your flight from the people. It has been said that your ambition was to be regent under Louis XVII.; that at a certain period all was prepared to proclaim your dictatorship; that you were the chief of the conspiracy; that neither Pitt, nor Cobourg, nor Prussia, were our most dangerous enemies, but that it was you, you alone; that La Montagne was full of your accomplices; in one word, that it was necessary to slay you.

"The Convention," continued Robespierre, "knows that I was divided in opinion with Danton, and that in the time of the treasons of Dumouriez my suspicions had preceded his. I reproached him then for not having been sufficiently irritated against that monster. I blamed him for not having pursued Brissot with sufficient vehemence. I swear that these are the only reproaches I now cast upon him. Danton, do not you know," continued the orator, in an almost subdued tone, "that the more courage and patriotism a man possesses, the more do the enemies of the public weal strive for his destruction? The enemies of the country appear to overwhelm me with praise; but I repudiate them. Do they believe that under this eulogy I do not discern the knife with which they desired to assassinate their country? The cause of patriots is reciprocal. I deceive myself, perhaps, as regards Danton; but seen in his family, his only meed is praise. I have watched him and his political conduct. A difference of opinion between him and me made me watch him with anxiety, sometimes even with anger. Danton wishes to be judged: he is right. Let me be tried also! Let those men present themselves who pretend to be greater patriots than we!"

XII. This saved Danton, but it did not restore to him his lost credit. This was what Robespierre desired. Danton was necessary to him as a *protégé*, not as an equal. He required that voice in La Montagne, to thunder against the Commune. The Commune subdued, Danton, subalternised in the Jacobins, would be forced to serve or to fear. Robespierre did not adopt the same treatment nor the same artifices towards the other false or corrupted members of the Convention, who governed in the Jacobins and the Cordeliers. The turn of Anarcharsis Klootz, the *orator of the human race*, being come! "Can we," exclaimed he, "regard a German baron as a patriot? as a democrat, a man who has a hundred thousand livres income? as a republican, a man who only frequents the houses of foreign bankers and counter-revolutionists, the enemies of France? Klootz, you pass your life with the agents and spies of foreign powers (Proly, Dubuisson, Pereyra), you are a traitor like them—you must be watched. Citizens! you have beheld him, one while at the foot of the tyrant and his court, at another, at the knees of the people. He has courted Brissot, Dumouriez, and La Gironde. He desired that France should attack the universe! He published a pamphlet, entitled '*Neither Marat nor Roland.*' He therein gave a blow to Roland, but a more outrageous one to La Montagne. His extravagant opinions, his obstinacy in speaking of a universal republic, and in inspiring us with the rage of conquest, were so many traps held out to the republic, to cast upon it every nation and all elements as enemies. Our foes, feigning to go beyond La Montagne, take us in the rear, to strike us with still more mortal blows!" Then softening himself even to tears, and parodying the words of Christ in his agony, "Let us watch," said he, "for the death of the country is at hand!"

The unfortunate Klootz, bending his head at the foot of the tribune, beneath the gestures of Robespierre, dared not essay to rise beneath the weight of reprobation that crushed him. A sincere and devoted fanatic of liberty, Klootz was, however, only guilty of connexions with corrupted men of the Convention, such as Fabre and Chabot, and with the materialist demagogues of Hébert's party. The political indulgence which had shielded Danton was extended to Fabre d'Eglantine, the poet and courtier of the people, whose sudden fortune caused his probity to be suspected.

Camille Desmoulins, another client of Danton, stood also in need of an excuse for the pity he had demonstrated in the Revolutionary Tribunal, at the moment of the condemnation of the Girondists. "It is true," said Camille Desmoulins, "that I experienced a sensation of pity on the judgment of the twenty-two; but those who reproached me with it were far from being in the same position as I. I cherished the Republic; but I was deceived in many men, such as Mirabeau and Lameth, whom I believed were true defenders of the people, and who ended by betraying them. A marked fatality has ordained, that of sixty persons who signed my marriage-contract, there should remain now to me only two living friends, Robespierre and Danton! All the others have fled, or are guillotined. Of this number were seven of the twenty-two. I have been always the first to denounce my own friends whenever I have seen that they acted ill. I have stifled the voice of friendship, which great talents had inspired."

This excuse, timidly uttered by Camille Desmoulins, did not explain the rumours of the Jacobins. Robespierre rose to quiet them. He loved and he despised this young man, weak as a woman, and changeable as a child. "We must," said Robespierre, "consider Camille Desmoulins, with his virtues and his failings. Sometimes timid and confiding, often courageous, always republican, we have seen him by turns the friend of Mirabeau, of Lameth, and of Dillon, but we have also seen him break the idols which he worshipped. I engage him to follow his career, but I engage also that he will be no longer so versatile, but will endeavour not to be deceived in men who play a great part upon the political stage." This amnesty of Robespierre silenced Hébert's friends, who desired to strike at Camille Desmoulins. No one dared proscribe him whom Robespierre excused.

XIII. In the mean time Vincent, Héron, Ronsin, and

Maillard, the principal chiefs of the Cordeliers, were arrested by order of the Committee of Public Safety, upon a denunciation of Fabre d'Eglantine, and afterwards restored to liberty on the explanation of Robespierre. Solely occupied in appearance with assuring the predominance of government over all parties, Robespierre read to the Convention a report upon the principles of a revolutionary government. This report threw a light upon his plans and upon those of the committee. "The theory of a revolutionary government," said he, "is as new as the Revolution which engendered it; the aim of a constitutional government is to preserve the Republic, that of a revolutionary government is to found it."

"Revolution is the war of liberty against its enemies. The constitution is the rule of victorious and peaceable liberty.

"The revolutionary government owes to good citizens every national protection. It owes death to the enemies of the people."

"It ought to steer between two dangers,—weakness and temerity, moderation and excess.

"Its power ought to be immense. The day when it shall fall into impure or perfidious hands, liberty will be lost.

"The foundation of the French Republic is no child's play,—misfortune to us if we break the fasces, in lieu of binding them! Let us sacrifice our self-love to this object. Scipio, after having conquered Hannibal and Carthage, gloried in serving under the orders of his enemy. If amongst us the functions of a revolutionary government are objects of ambition, in place of being painful duties, the Republic is already lost.

"Hardly had we repressed the falsely philosophical excesses against adoration, hardly had we here pronounced the name of ultra revolutionist, than the partisans of royalty desired to apply it to ardent patriots, who had in good faith committed some errors in zeal. They sought for chiefs amongst you. Their hope is to place in arrest one with the other. This deadly struggle would avenge the aristocrats and the Girondists. We must confound their hopes, by judging their accomplices."

This double-edged harangue, evidently directed against the Hébertists, who accused the Committee of Public Safety of weakness, and against the Dantonists, who accused it of excess of rigour, terminated in a decree, ordering the prompt trial of Dietrich, the mayor of Strasburg, of Custine, son of the general, and of a certain number of generals, accused of complicity with the stranger. These were almost all innocent victims, sacrificed to restore peace between three parties: it was blood shed to the anarchy in the Convention, to appease it. But this sacrifice appeased none.

XIV. The quarrels of Camille Desmoulins and of Hébert, in their journals, fomented discord. Tacit symptoms revealed to the eyes of Robespierre and of the committee the sullen murmurs of Danton. The abdication and silence of this orator disquieted the Committee of Public Safety. Since his return from Arcis-sur-Aubes, his repose was unnatural. His humanity was suspected. The blood of September, which still stained his hands, had not rendered so much pity likely to exist in Danton's soul. They saw, in his affected mercy, rather a calculation than a feeling. This calculation was a threat against those who wielded the arm of punishment. Danton, in affecting to separate himself from them, appeared to watch the hour of a return of public opinion, to turn this arm against them; to impute the blood to them; reproach them with the victims; profit by the resentments they might have roused, and possess himself of the Revolution, their work; casting them to the vengeance of the people. These suspicions of Robespierre and of the committee against Danton were justified by his nature, by his situation, and by his profound policy. The crimes and virtues of Danton thus blended themselves at this moment to destroy him. The ostentation of his idle and voluptuous life at Sèvres, when the republic was on fire, and when blood flowed from every vein, — in short, the inexplicable fortune which people attributed to him, compared with the indigence of Robespierre, gave the finishing blow to suspicion. The rashness of Camille Desmoulins here recoiled upon Danton. They did not believe that this young and volatile pamphleteer was capable of daring every thing, if he did not feel himself backed up by a Colossus. His audacious style passed for the vituperations of his patron.

Camille Desmoulins had desired to flatter Robespierre, by directing the *Vieux Cordelier* against Hébert and his party, but he found he had thus offended this distrustful rival of Danton. Strange error of an adulation, which deceives itself as to the hour, and which wounds when desirous to caress. The whole knot of the drama, about to reveal itself, was contained in the misunderstanding of a pamphleteer. His inconsiderate pen, in desiring to kill his enemies, hastened the hour of his friends and his own.

XV. Camille Desmoulins commenced his first number of the *Vieux Cordelier* by flattering Robespierre.

"Victory has rested with the Jacobins," wrote he, in relating the acquittal of Danton; "because in the midst of the many ruins of colossal reputations of civism, that of Robespierre is still standing. Already powerful from the ground gained during the illness and absence of Danton, the party of his accusers, amidst the most touching and convincing parts of his justification, hissed, hung their heads, and smiled with pity, as at the discourse of a man condemned by universal approbation. We have conquered, nevertheless; because after the thundering eloquence of Robespierre, whose talent appears to increase with the perils of the republic, and the deep impression he has left on all minds, it was impossible to dare to raise a voice against Danton without giving, as it were, a public receipt for the guineas of Pitt."

He affected, moreover, adoration for Marat, in order to shield himself, under this posthumous fame, against those who reproached him with weakness.

"Since the death of that enlightened patriot whom I dared three years since to style the *divine* Marat, it is the only step which the enemies of the republic gained. And I attested it to sixty of my colleagues — how often I have lamented in their bosoms the fatal success of this act! At last Robespierre, in an opening speech, which the Convention decreed should be sent to all Europe, raised the veil. It appertained to his courage and popularity to slide adroitly under it, as he has done, the great word — the salutary word — that Pitt has changed his batteries; that he has undertaken to effect, by exaggeration, what he could not effect by moderation, and that there were men, politically counter-revolutionists, who wrought hard to form, like Roland, the public mind, and to falsify opinion in a contrary sense, but to another extreme equally fatal to liberty. Afterwards, in two discourses, not less eloquent in the Jacobins, Robespierre delivered himself with still more vehemence against the intriguers who, by perfidious and exclusive eulogy, flattered themselves they could wean him from all his old companions in arms and from the holy battalion of Cordeliers, with whom he had so often vanquished the royal army. To the shame of priests, he has defended the God whom they so cowardly abandoned!"

There Camille Desmoulins caused the genius of Tacitus to reflect on modern crimes; French, under his pen, became concise and monumental as the Latin.

"After the siege of Perousa," say the historians, "notwithstanding the capitulation, the answer of Augustus was —'You must all perish!' Three hundred of the principal citizens were conducted to the hotel of Julius Cæsar, and there slaughtered on the day of the 16th of March, after which the remainder of the inhabitants were put indiscriminately to the sword; and the town, one of the most beautiful in Italy, was reduced to ashes, and as effectually effaced from the surface of the earth as Herculaneum. There was formerly at Rome, says Tacitus, a law which specified crimes of state and *lèse majesté*, and bore capital punishment. These crimes of *lèse majesté* under the republic were reduced to four kinds. If an army had been abandoned in an enemy's country, if one had excited sedition; if the members of constituted bodies had ill administered affairs, or the public money; or if the majesty of the Roman people had been abased. The emperors only required some additional articles to this law to comprise both citizens and entire cities in the proscription. Since conversations had become state crimes, only a step was requisite to convert into crimes the simple glance of sorrow, compassion, a sigh, or silence itself. Soon it was a crime of *lèse majesté*, or counter-revolution, in the town of Murcia, for having raised a monument to its inhabitants who had perished at the siege of Modena, fighting under Augustus; but because Augustus then combated with Brutus, Murcia shared the fate of Perousa. Drusus having asked the soothsayers if he should not one day possess great wealth, was a crime of counter-revolution. The journalist Cremutius Cordus having called Brutus and Cassius the last of the Romans, was a crime of counter-revolution. One of the descendants of Cassius having in his house a portrait of his grand-uncle, was a crime of counter-revolution. Mamercus Scaurus having composed a tragedy which contained a verse to which one might attach a double meaning, was a crime of counter-revolution. Torquatus Silenus having been improvident, was a crime of counter-revolution. Pétréius having dreamt about Claudius, was a crime of counter-revolution. The wife of Appius Silanus having dreamt the same, was a crime of counter-revolution. Because a friend of Sejanus had sought an asylum in one of the country-houses of Pomponius, it was a crime of counter-revolution. To complain of the misfortune of the times was a counter-revolution, because that was an attack upon the government. Not to have invoked the genius of Caligula, was a crime of counter-revolution; for having failed therein, a great number of citizens were lacerated with blows, condemned to the mines or wild beasts, and some of them sawed through the middle of the body. The mother of Fabius Geminus having wept over the terrible death of her son, was a crime of counter-revolution.

"It was necessary to show joy at the death of one's friend, or of one's parent, if men would not expose themselves to destruction. Under Nero, many, whose relations he had caused to die, went to thank God for it, and illuminated. At least it was requisite to wear an air of contentment, an open and quiet mien. One was afraid that fear itself might render a man guilty. Every thing gave umbrage to the tyrant. Were a citizen popular; he was the rival of the prince, who might incite a civil war — suspected. Did any one shun, on the contrary, popularity, and hold himself apart; this retired life had given time for consideration — suspected.

"Were a man poor; it was necessary to watch him more closely. No one is so enterprising as he who has nought — suspected. Were you of a sombre, melancholy character, or negligently dressed; your affliction was caused by the good state of public affairs — suspected.

"Were he virtuous and austere in his manners — good, too — another Brutus, who pretended, by his pallor, to censure an amiable and well-curled court — suspected.

"Were that man a philosopher, an orator, or a poet, more renown must necessarily appertain to him than to those who governed. Could it be permitted that an orator should have more attention paid to him than to the emperor in his private box? — suspected.

In short, had one acquired reputation in war, that talent rendered one's situation the more dangerous. There is some resource with an incompetent general. If he were a traitor, he could not so entirely deliver up an army to the enemy, that some one returned not. But an officer of merit, of Corbulonus or Agricola, if he betrayed, he could not save one single man. The best was to destroy one's self. At the least, it was necessary to leave the army promptly at a distance. Suspected.

"One may imagine that it would have been much worse had one been grandson or ally of Augustus; one might then have pretensions to the throne — suspected. Thus, it was impossible to possess any quality, unless one had made it an instrument of tyranny, without awakening the despot and exposing one's self to certain perdition. It was a crime to hold a place of consequence, or to tender your resignation of it. But the greatest of all crimes was the being incorruptible.

"A man was annihilated on account of his name, or that of his ancestors; another on account of his beautiful house at Alba. Valerius Asiaticus by reason of his gardens, which had pleased the empress. Italicus, because his countenance displeased her; and a multitude without being able to divine the cause. Toranius, the tutor, the old friend of Augustus, was proscribed by his pupil without knowing wherefore, if it were not that he was a man of probity and loved his country. Neither the magistracy nor his innocence could guarantee Quintus Gelius from the bloody hands of the executioner; this Augustus, whose clemency has been so much vaunted, plucked his eyes out with his own hands. People were poignarded and betrayed by his slaves or their enemies; and if they had not enemies, an assassin was found in their host, a friend, or a son. In one word, under these reigns the natural death of a man celebrated, or only in place, was so rare, that it was put into the gazettes, and transmitted by the historian to the memory of ages. Under this consulate, says our annalist, there was a pontiff, Piso, who died in his bed, which appeared to be considered a prodigy.

"Such were the accusers, such the judges. The tribunals, the protectors of life and property, had become the shambles, where what bore the name of execution and confiscation, was but theft and assassination. If there were no method of sending a man to the tribunal, recourse was had to assassination or to poison. Celer Ælius, the famous Locusta, and the physician Anicetus, were poisoners by profession, patented, travelling in the suite of the court, and a description of grand officers of the crown. When these half measures did not suffice, the tyrant resorted to a general proscription. It is thus that Caracalla, after having killed Geta with his own hand, declared all his friends and partisans enemies of the republic, to the number of twenty thousand; and Tiberius, the enemy of the republic, killed all the friends and partisans of Sejanus, to the number of thirty thousand. It is thus that Sylla, in one day interdicted fire and water to seventy thousand Romans. If an emperor had had a prætorian guard of tigers and panthers, he could not have rent more persons in pieces than the denunciators, the freedmen, the poisoners, and the paid assassins of Cæsar; for cruelty caused by hunger ceases with hunger, whereas that caused by the fear, the cupidity, and the suspicion of tyrants, has no limits. To what degree of degradation and baseness cannot the human race descend, when one reflects that Rome suffered the government of a monster, who regretted that his reign was not marked by some calamity, plague, famine, or earthquake, who envied Augustus for having had in his reign an army cut to pieces, and the reign of Tiberius, on account of the disasters of the amphitheatre of Fidenes, where fifty thousand persons had perished; and, to say all in one word, who wished that the Roman people had but one head, that one blow might end them!"

XVI. Then he raised himself to the philosophy of Fénélon, to give to the Revolution the colouring of a political religion.

"Certain persons think apparently that liberty, like infancy, must necessarily pass through the vale of tears and cries to the age of maturity. It is, on the contrary, the nature of liberty, that to enjoy it, it suffices to desire it. A people are free the instant they desire to be so. Liberty has neither old age nor infancy; it has but one age,—that of force and vigour; otherwise those who sacrifice themselves for the republic would be as stupid as these fanatics of La Vendée, who kill themselves for the enjoyment of a paradise in which they will never revel. When we have perished in the fight, shall we also rise again in three days, like these stupid peasants? No! this liberty, which I adore, is not the unknown God. We fight to defend the weal of which she immediately possesses those who invoke her. These benefits are the declaration of rights, the mildness of republican maxims, fraternity, holy equality, and inviolability of principles. Behold the traces of the goddess's steps! .

"Oh! my dear co-citizens, should we be degraded to such a point as to prostrate ourselves before such divinities? No! Liberty, that liberty descended from heaven, that is not an opera nymph, nor a red bonnet, a dirty shirt, or rags; liberty is reason, happiness, reason, equality, justice, your sublime constitution. Do you desire that I should recognise her, that I should fall at her feet, that I should shed all my blood for her? Open the prisons to those two hundred thousand citizens whom you call suspected; for in the declaration of rights there are no houses of suspicion, there are only houses of arrest. Suspicion has no prison but the public accuser. There are no suspected people; there are but those accused of crimes foreseen by the law. And do not believe that this measure will be fatal to the republic, it would be the most revolutionary measure that you would ever have adopted. You desire to exterminate all your enemies by the guillotine, but was there ever a greater folly? Can you cause one single soul to perish upon the scaffold without making enemies to yourselves of his family and friends? Do you imagine that it is these women, these old men, these evil doers, these egotists, and these sluggards of the Revolution, whom you imprison, that are dangerous? Of your enemies there remain amongst you only cowards and invalids; the brave and the strong have emigrated, they have perished at Lyons or in La Vendée. All the remainder merit not your wrath. This multitude of pamphleteers, of householders, and of shopkeepers whom you incarcerate in the duel between monarchy and the republic, has only resembled that people of Rome whose indifference Tacitus depicts in the combat between Vitellius and Vespasian."

XVII. The expression, "*committee of clemency*," which he had thrown out amongst opinion, flattered likewise the generosity of the conquerors, in consoling the misery and weakness of the vanquished.

"What benedictions would arise then from all quarters! I think very differently from those who tell you that terror must be left to the order of the day. I am certain, on the contrary, that liberty would be consolidated, and Europe conquered if you had a committee of mercy. It is this committee which would wind up the Revolution, for clemency is a revolutionary measure, and the most efficacious of all when it is distributed with wisdom. Let fools and fops call me *modéré* if they will. I do not blush at not being more furious than Marcus Brutus; and behold what Brutus wrote: 'You would do better, my dear Cicero, to use every exertion to curtail the civil wars, than to exercise your wrath and pursue your resentments against the vanquished.' We know that Thrasybulus, after taking possession of Athens, at the head of the exiles, and having condemned to death those of the thirty tyrants who had not perished sword in hand, exercised extreme indulgence as regarded the remainder of the citizens, and even caused a general amnesty to be proclaimed. Shall we say that Thrasybulus and Brutus were Feuillants or Brissotins? I consent to pass for a *modéré* like these great men." Afterwards, reverting to the committee of clemency:—

"At this expression, 'committee of clemency,' what patriot does not feel his heart moved? for patriotism consists in the plenitude of every virtue, and cannot consequently exist where there is neither humanity nor philanthropy, but a soul arid and dried up by egotism. Oh, my dear Robespierre, it is to you that I here address the word; for I have seen the moment when Pitt had only you to conquer; when without you the ship Argo would have perished, the republic have entered into chaos, and the society of Jacobins and La Montagne have become a Tower of Babel. Robespierre! you, whose eloquent discourses posterity will read, remember these lessons of philosophy,—that love is stronger and more durable than fear, that admiration and religion attract benefactions, that acts of clemency are the ladder of falsehood, as Tertullian has told us, by which the members of the Committee of Public Safety are raised up to heaven; and may they never ascend there upon bloody steps! Already you have approached closely to this idea in the measure you caused to be decreed yesterday in the meeting of decadi, the tenth day, thirtieth Frimaire. It is true that it is rather a committee of justice which has been proposed, still why should clemency have become a crime in the republic?"

Lastly, he dared to address himself to Barrère, the secretary of the Committee of Public Safety. "The *modérés* and the aristocrats," said Barrère, "never meet now without asking each other, 'Have you read the *Vieux Cordelier?*' I the patron of aristocrats—of *modérés!* Let the vessel of the republic, which runs between two dangers of which I have spoken, approach too closely that of moderation, you shall see if I will aid the manœuvre,—you shall see if I am a *modéré.* I was a revolutionist before all of you; I have been a brigand, and I take glory to myself for it, when on the night of the 12th to 13th July, 1789, I and General Danican made the gunmakers open their shops, to arm the first battalion of *sans culottes.* Then I possessed the audacity of the Revolution. To-day, as deputy of the National Assembly, the audacity which becomes me is that of reason, that of stating my opinions with frankness.

"But, O my colleagues! I will tell you, as Brutus did Cicero, 'We fear death too much, and exile, and poverty.' *Nimium timemus mortem et exilium et paupertatem.* Does this life merit that a representative should prolong it at the expense of honour? There is not one of us who has not attained the summit of the hill of life,—it remains to us only to descend it over a thousand inevitable precipices, even for the most obscure man. This descent will not open to us any passage,—no site which was not offered a thousand times more deliciously to that Solomon who said, in the midst of his seven hundred wives and all his happiness, 'I have found that the dead are happier than the living, and that the most happy is he who has never been born.'"

XVIII. Hébert, stigmatised in these pamphlets, uttered exclamations of grief and rage under the stiletto of Camille Desmoulins. He did not cease to provoke his expulsion from the Jacobins, and to denounce him to the Cordeliers as a stipendiary of superstition and aristocracy. Barrère, on his side, fulminated against Camille Desmoulins in the Committee of Public Safety, and in the tribune of the Convention. He accused him of discouraging patriotism, and of comparing the painful energy of the founders of liberty to the cruelty of tyrants. Camille, disowned also by Danton and scolded by Robespierre, began to fear that he had placed his hand between two colossus, who were about to crush him in their shock. But blushing to recede before public opinion, which encouraged these first appeals of clemency, he aggravated his crime in the new pamphlets, which at the time redoubled his eloquence and invectives against the Jacobins.

Hébert, Ronsin, Vincent, Momoro, and Chaumette, failing in resolution at the moment of the struggle, endeavoured, like Camille Desmoulins, to render Robespierre disinterested, or to move him by adulation. The wife of Hébert, a nun freed from the cloister by the Revolution, but worthy of a different husband, was intimate at the house of Duplay. Robespierre experienced for this female the esteem and respect which he refused to Hébert. She endeavoured to reconcile him to her husband. Invited to a dinner at Duplays, she tried to dissipate the suspicions which Robespierre cherished against the faction of the Cordeliers. In the evening, Robespierre, unbending himself to Hébert, insinuated that the concentration of power in a triumvirate composed of Danton, Hébert, and himself, might perchance bind fast the fasces of the republic which was ready to break asunder. Hébert replied that he felt himself incapable of any other part than that of the Aristophanes of the people. Robespierre regarded him with distrust. The wife of Hébert said, on withdrawing to her husband, that such an insinuation, received and repulsed, was a mortal danger for him. "Reassure yourself," said Hébert, "I fear Robespierre no more than Danton. Let them come, if they dare, to seek me in the middle of my commune."

By turns trembling or rash, Hébert did not speak with less distrust of Danton in his pamphlet, and in the tribune of the Cordeliers. The applause of the populace, the audacity of Vincent, the arms of Ronsin, and the ill-ordered bands of Maillard, reassured Hébert. He openly decried the Committee of Public Safety. The government had but the choice of annihilating this factious man, or of being annihilated by him. The Convention was menaced by a new 31st of May. He demanded the arrest and execution of seventy-three deputies, accomplices of the Girondists. Vincent stuck up placards in the Cordeliers, wherein he said he would reduce to fifteen hundred souls the population of Lyons, amounting to fifty thousand, and charge the Rhône with the burial of the bodies. Chaumette caused petitioners to pour into the Commune from the sections, demanding openly the expulsion of the disaffected party of the Convention. The Committee of Public Safety knew, by its secret agents, the anarchical plots of Ronsin. It was time to destroy them. It became necessary to profit by the moment when these same conspirators threatened Danton. Such was the motive of the manœuvres and indulgences of Robespierre in the Jacobins, in respect to Danton and Camille Desmoulins. Resolved to destroy the two factions, the Committee of Public Safety took care to attack them on that very day. It was necessary to leave hope to the one, in order the more easily to crush the other. The secret of this policy of the Committee did not transpire. Danton, with all his foresight, was himself deceived. He took the patience of Robespierre for an alliance—it was a snare, and he fell into it; and this, the exclamation of his humbled pride revealed some days afterwards:—"To die is nothing,—*but* to die the dupe of Robespierre!"

XIX. The Jacobins were for the Committee of Public Safety the instrument of defeat or of victory. Robespierre charged himself with rallying them in the Convention. He multiplied himself, he exhausted all his strength to occupy the tribune constantly, and to exercise over them the fascination of his name. This tribune became the only sonorous point of the republic. The Convention affected to speak little, since she exercised supreme power. Sovereignty has no need of eloquence—it acts. The Convention further feared to divide itself by discussions before its enemies. Its dignity and strength were in its silence. Opinion neither grumbled nor broke out but amongst the Jacobins. Robespierre lost not there a single opportunity of discouraging or menacing the Hébertists. "Let those," he exclaimed one day, regarding the group formed by Ronsin, Vincent, and the Cordeliers,—"let those who would desire that the Convention were degraded, behold here the presage of their ruin! let them understand the oracle of their certain death! they will be exterminated!"

Camille Desmoulins had been allowed a delay, to justify his bitter insinuations against terror. He presented himself, already vanquished, and muttered some excuses.

"Stay, citizens," said he, "I no longer know where I am. On every side I am accused. I am calumniated. I have long believed in the accusations against the Committee of Public Safety. Collot-d'Herbois has assured me that these accusations were a farce. I there bewildered myself. Is it a crime in your eyes to have been deceived!" "Explain yourself in regard to the *Vieux Cordelier*," exclaimed a voice to him. Camille hesitated. Robespierre regarded him with a severe eye. "It is now some time since," said he, "that I undertook the defence of Camille Desmoulins when accused by the Jacobins. Friendship adduced to me some extenuating reflections upon his character. But to-day I am compelled to hold a very different language. He had promised to abjure his political heresies which cover the pages of the *Vieux Cordelier*. Inflated by the prodigious sale of his pamphlet, and by the perfidious praise which the aristocrats showered upon him, he has not abandoned the path which error traced out to him. His writings are dangerous. They cherish the hope of our enemies. They court public malignity. He is an admirer of the ancients. The immortal writings of Cicero and of Demosthenes constitute his delight. He loves the Philippics. He is a child led away by bad companions. We must be severe against his writings, which Brissot himself would not have disowned, and preserve his person. I demand that his numbers may be burned."

"To burn is not to answer," exclaimed the imprudent pamphleteer.

"Do you, then, presume to justify writings that form the favourite reading of the aristocracy?" inquired Robespierre: "Learn, Camille, that, were you other than you are, so much favour and indulgence as you have experienced would not be extended to you."

"You condemn me in this place," replied Camille, "but in your own house your sentiments were differently expressed: did I not read all I had written to you, beseeching you, in the name of friendship, to enlighten me by your counsels, and to guide me by your superior judgment?"

"You showed me but portions of what you had written," rejoined Robespierre, severely; "and as I never espouse any person's quarrel, I did not desire to see the other parts. It might have been supposed they were written at my dictation!"

"Citizens!" cried Danton, "Camille Desmoulins should not feel alarmed at the somewhat severe remarks of Robespierre. May cool and impartial justice ever preside at your meetings. But have a care, lest, in condemning Camille, you strike a fatal blow against the liberty of the press."

XX. These struggles, which were indeed but the prelude to others still more severe, did not prevent Robespierre from dictating his own principles to the Convention.

"Let the whole world understand the system of our political schemes," said he, in one of his reports on the spirit of republican government. "What is our aim? — the reign of that eternal justice, whose laws are written, not in stone or marble, but in the hearts of men — in the heart of the slave who forgets, as well as in the breast of the tyrant who denies them. We would fain (in our own country) substitute morality for selfishness, honesty for honour, the duties of life for the mere conventional forms, reason for prejudice; in fine, all the virtues and miracles of a republic for the vices and falsehood of a monarchy: these prodigies can only be effected by a democratic and republican government. Democracy is a state in which the people, though all powerful, are still in subjection to the laws they themselves have made, and who work out, by means of their deputies, that which they could not accomplish by themselves. Not only is virtue the very soul of a democracy, but it can be found in no other form of government. In a monarchy, I know but of one individual who can be said to care about his country, and that is the monarch himself; for he only has any interest in the matter. Does he not singly occupy the place of the people?

"The French are the first nation in the world who have established a pure democracy; and that they have done by calling all men to accept equality, and the full exercise and enjoyment of their rights as citizens. The justice of the cause shall bear them triumphantly over all the tyrants who oppose them. We seek not to mould the republic of France after the model of that of Sparta, but nature imposes on every living creature, both physically and morally, the great law of self-preservation. We are accused of precipitating and even of violating the forms of judgment. Look back to Rome: when the consul there discovered the conspiracy, and put an end to it on the instant, by ordering the accomplices of Catiline to be put to death, *he* was accused of violating the usual forms; but by whom was the accusation made? By the ambitious Cæsar, who desired to swell his own train, by bringing over to his side the band of conspirators."

This allusion to Danton and his accomplices caused a powerful sensation throughout the assembly, and made even Danton change colour.

"Two factions," pursued Robespierre, "are at this moment working against us — the one would urge us to weakness, the other excite us to excess; the one would elevate liberty to the rank of a Bacchante — the other degrade it to a state of utter prostitution. Inferior *intrigants*, who are frequently really good citizens, but misled and deluded by others, are to be found espousing both these parties. Their leaders belong to the cause of kings; one of these parties is styled moderates — the other is composed of false revolutionists. Would you restrain the seditious? The first party may remind you of the clemency of Cæsar. You discover that such an individual acted well and nobly while he served the republic, but fell from his high and honourable estate directly he betrayed it. The second class of persons imitate, nay, surpass, the vices and follies of Heliogabalus and Caligula; but tell me, does the rank scum left by the ocean render its tossing waves, its mighty billows, less grand or imposing?"

XXI. This address was the signal for the attack of the Convention against the Hébertists and the Dantonists.

The Committee of Public Safety caused Grammont, Duret, and Lapalus, friends of Vincent and Ronsin, to be arrested, under a charge preferred against them by Couthon, of having disgraced the reign of terror itself by acts of violence and spoliation calculated to change patriotism into plunder and extortion, and to convert national justice into deliberate murder.

The Hébertists trembled while Robespierre paralysed all their movements and expelled their agents. Taking refuge in the Cordeliers, they passed from anger to complaint, from threats to supplication. Saint-Just, charged by Robespierre to comment on his "Principles of Government," in reports whose style was at once cutting and concise, read these specimens of oracular wisdom to the Convention. The first related to the prisoners: —

"You desired a republic," said Saint-Just, "but if you accept not at the same time its component parts, the edifice you have reared will fall and crush you in its ruins."

These demonstrations of severity on the part of Saint-Just induced the partisans of Hébert to believe that the Committee of Public Safety trembled before them, and assumed their tone and manner in order to propitiate them. Couthon was confined to his bed by an aggravation of his bodily infirmities, and Robespierre had experienced a weakening illness that for several days past prevented his attending the committee: these two circumstances induced them to run all risks. Irritated by the conduct of Ronsin and Vincent, Hébert boldly asserted the necessity of an insurrection. At the very mention of the word every face became pallid with alarm. The members of the various clubs contrived, one by one, to get out of the way. In vain did Vincent endeavour to encourage the weak and to recall the fugitives. In vain did he cover the statue of Liberty with black crape. One society only, that of "Unity," over which Vincent himself presided, formed a bond of union with them. The principal branches of the clubs remained motionless and inactive.

The greater number, however, upon hearing of the indisposition of Robespierre, expressed the greatest uneasiness and alarm for the safety of one whom they considered as the very essence of the republic. Deputations were formed for the purpose of making frequent inquiries respecting the state of Robespierre, and of reporting the progress or abatement of his disease.

The spontaneous assemblage of so dense a mass of persons around the door of a plain citizen conveyed to Robespierre the full conviction of his power.

Danton, though an object of equal admiration, was not treated with the same honours.

"I am an example of the justice of the people, calculated to encourage others to act the part of faithful servants to the republic," said Robespierre to Duplay, when the latter announced these deputations to him. "For the last five years have I been preserved and defended from the power and malice of my enemies through their steady zeal, and now, in their hour of peril, they would seek my aid even in the chamber of death. Heaven grant I may not one day be an instance of their caprice and inconstancy."

XXII. Collot d'Herbois was charged by the Committee of Public Safety to take Robespierre's place at the next meeting of the Jacobins. At it he spoke vaguely of the unsettled state of the people, entreating every good citizen to remain perfectly calm, and attached to the present government.

Had Hébert's scheme succeeded, Collot d'Herbois was fully prepared to welcome and embrace it; but being a failure, he loudly inveighed against it.

Fouquier-Tinville was summoned to the Convention, in order to report the state of feeling amongst the people, while Saint-Just made a most powerful discourse upon the various foreign factions existing against the republic among their various members. He implicated Chabot, Fabre d'Eglantine, Ronsin, Vincent, Hébert, Momoro, Ducroquet, Colonel Saumur, and several other obscure individuals, forming part of the faction of the Cordeliers, whom he affected to confound with the royalists. "Where," said he, "shall we find a Tarpeian Rock down which to hurl those who expected to receive from the Revolution full power to become as perverse and unmanageable as the rich and great were under the monarchy? Do you know which was the lowest of all classes of people under a monarchical form of government? Why, those who went about doing nothing, absorbed in their luxurious follies and wasteful debauchery, whose only thoughts were evil ones, who exhibit no other feelings than those of *ennui*, a constant craving after fresh pleasures, and an aversion to the ordinary mode of life, dragging their satiated bodies from one place of amusement to another, and evincing no interest in any other question than to inquire after the last piece of news, — men who presume to form their own suppositions, and to guess at the intentions of government, ready at any instant to change their party from mere caprice or curiosity, that they may pry into the secrets of others.

"These are the useless and dangerous set of individuals who require exterminating, or at least suppressing. The love of fame has made as many martyrs as the love of fortune; and some there are that, like Erostratus, would rather burn down the temple of liberty, than not arrive at notoriety by some means. Let there then be fixed bounds to authority, even as there are limits to the human mind and the world itself, beyond which boundaries lie only death and annihilation. Wisdom has also its limits.

"The opposite to liberty is slavery, as we find that as nature ends, chaos begins; but these difficult times will pass away. Do you mock the graves of those who but lately conspired against the republic? Soon will those graves be filled. Measures are taken to secure the guilty men for whom they are prepared—even as I speak their doom draws near."

The fatal moment had indeed approached. That night Ronsin, general of the revolutionary army, Hébert, Vincent, Momoro, Ducroquet, Cook, a Dutch banker, Saumur, colonel of infantry, and governor of Pondicherry, Leclerc, Pereyra, Anarcharsis Klootz, Défieux, Dubuisson, and Proly were arrested and conveyed to the Conciergerie, falling not as political conspirators but as common criminals. Received upon their arrival at the prison by the ironical applause, hisses, and groans of contempt from those unhappy prisoners they themselves had sent there, they had neither the consolations of pity nor the decencies of misfortune. They shed many and bitter tears as they bewailed their hard fate. These details concerning them were furnished by a spy of Robespierre, who passed for one of their accomplices, but shared their confinement merely that he might be enabled to reveal every word and action that passed.

XXIII. On the morning of the 24th of March, 1794, five carts laden with the condemned Hébertists proceeded to the place of execution; the crowd not deigning to honour the miserable victims with the slightest attention until the last of the vehicles rumbled by, when perceiving that it contained Anarcharsis Klootz, Vincent, and Hébert himself, some men carrying long sticks, at the end of which were suspended braziers of burning charcoal, symbolical of the "*Charcoal-burners*" of the "*Père Duchesne*," thrust them into the face of Hébert, insulting him with the same bitter railleries with which he tormented so many other victims, but to this he appeared wholly insensible. Vincent wept bitterly, but Anarcharsis Klootz preserved that calm imperturbability of feature which formed part of his system. Utterly indifferent to the taunts and execration of the crowd, he continued to preach the doctrine of materialism to his companions in death to the very instant when eternity opened before them.

This ended a party more worthy to have been styled a band, than a faction. The great personal esteem felt by Robespierre for Pache caused him to exempt the mayor of Paris from the proscription, deeming him neither perverse nor daring enough to excite the fears of government; and the council of the Commune, once decimated, made Pache nothing more than an idol without arms, powerless in the Hotel-de-Ville, except in serving to secure the fidelity of the people to the Convention. Shortly after Chaumette, Bishop of Gobel, was arrested, and with him Hérault de Séchelles and his colleague Simon, who was associated with him in his mission to Savoy. In this manner were the supporters of Danton gradually removed. Danton, however, either did not, or (feeling his want of power to prevent it) feigned not, to perceive what was going on around him.

Robespierre, who had observed the strictest seclusion since his triumph over the Hébertists, still drove on his scheme for purifying the republic. He wrote with his own hand a project for drawing up a report of the affair of Chabot. This document was found in an unfinished state among his papers: in it mere miserable intrigues were elevated in a conspiracy, whilst Chabot, who was nothing more than an ignorant individual, was transformed by the pen of Robespierre into a formidable conspirator.

" The representatives of the people," says Robespierre, in this report, " can find no peace but in the grave. Traitors may be put to death, but they leave their treason behind them." He next proceeded to state how Chabot, either as led away by others, or a willing accomplice, had married the sister of Frey, the Austrian banker, and received with her a dowry of 200,000 francs. How he had been charged with employing part of this sum in corrupting the deputy entrusted to draw up the report of the state of affairs in the East India Company, with a view to favour the interests of the speculating foreigners with whom he had allied himself, and how at last Chabot had come tardily to denounce this manœuvre to the Committee of Public Safety. The continuation of this narrative appears to have been interrupted by illness; but Fabre d'Eglantine, Bazire, and Chabot were arrested by order of the committee, either as guilty themselves or as exciters of guilt in others, and thrown into prison. The names of these three deputies, all known as the most intimate friends of Danton, appeared in public opinion to intimate that Danton himself was not so pure and blameless as he should be; that his associates being thus charged as faithless to the nation, left his own fidelity quite open to suspicion.

## BOOK LV.

I. Robespierre, however, still hesitated to strike at Danton. His indecision, and that of Saint-Just and Couthon, whom he ruled, left inevitable death wavering over the head of his ancient rival. Robespierre did not esteem him, but he did not hate, and he had ceased to fear, him. If this man had been more incorruptible, Robespierre would willingly have shared empire with him. That Anthony would have perfected this Lepidus. Danton was gifted by nature with the exact faculties of which Robespierre was deficient — perspicacity and force of inspiration. The one was the idea, the other the hand of a revolution. Political courage was more predominant in Robespierre, physical courage more prompt and more instinctive in Danton.

These two men, united, would have been the body and soul of the republic. But the sentiment of Robespierre detected the impure alloy of the materialism of Danton. "To misally one's thought," said he, "is not to strengthen, but to corrupt it. Virtue, pure though defeated, is more powerful than triumphant vice."

An intense anxiety agitated him during the days and nights preceding his resolution. He was often heard to exclaim, "Ah! if Danton were an honest man! if he were truly a republican!" "What would I give to have the lantern of the Greek philosopher," said he once, "to read the heart of Danton, and to know if he were more the friend than the enemy of the republic!"

The Jacobins hesitated less in their suspicions. Danton was, in their eyes, but the statue of potters' earth, which would dissolve on the first showers. "It was necessary," they said, "to wrest this false god from the multitude, to make him adore pure revolutionary virtue. This Pericles of corrupted Athens did not belong to Sparta."

Robespierre avowed it, but he trembled for the consequence. He inwardly asked himself if the powerful popularity of Danton over La Montagne would not disseminate itself, after his death, amongst some subaltern heads as vicious, but less powerful and more perfidious than that of Danton?—if it would not be better to share with him the ascendency over the Convention than to yield that ascendency to the chance of other popularity?—if, when the evil one was dead, vice would die with him in the republic?—if, in the great assaults which the government would have to sustain against the factions which increased, the presence, voice, and energy of Danton would not be wanting to the country and himself?—if, in fact, this blood of the second of the revolutionists which he was about to shed would not cause some hardy villain to thirst for the blood of the first?—if the tomb of his immolated colleague would not constantly be open, as a snare, at the foot of the tribune where he already met the tomb of Vergniaud?—if it were a good example for the future, and a good augury for his own fortune, to dig thus the sepulchre in the middle of the Convention, and to make himself a footstool of the corpses of his rivals? Nature at length subdued, but not totally stifled in the heart of Robespierre, revolted in his breast against the cruel necessity of policy.

Danton was his rival, it is true, but he was the oldest and most illustrious companion of his revolutionary career. During five years of struggles, defeats, and victories, they had constantly fought together to overthrow royalty, to save the soil, and to found the republic. Their souls, their word, their vigils, their labours, were mixed up with the toils and the dangers of the foundation of the Revolution. They sat upon the same benches; they met each other in the same clubs; they never clashed. They had always entertained, or at least affected to do so, that esteem and admiration for each other which touches the heart; they had mutually defended each other against their common enemies. There was sufficient space in the republic for two great and opposite ambitions. Then Danton was young, the father of children soon to become orphans, enamoured of a new wife, whom he preferred to unlimited power, and who weakened his ambition.

II. Danton, as we have seen, had voluntarily retired from the Committee of Public Safety, whether to deaden the envy which began to find him too great, or to enjoy in peace that leisure which was dearer to him than ambition. Love, study, friendship, some occasional works for the Convention, some languishing intrigues, and some too openly displayed prospects of return to power, occupied his days. He often assembled at Sèvres his friends — Philippeaux, Legendre, Lacroix, Fabre d'Eglantine, Camille Desmoulins, Bazire, Westermann, and some politicians of La Montagne. These men, who were nothing more than joyous guests, passed for conspirators. Danton, but little temperate in his conversation, overflowed with bitter and cutting *critiques* upon the government. "France thinks to do without me, — we shall see!" he frequently said. He undervalued Robespierre, who had always appeared to him as a metaphysician clothed in his virtue, embarrassed in his systems, and now clogged with blood (*embourbé dans le sang*). "Danton," said Fabre d'Eglantine to him one day, "do you know of what you are accused? They say that you have only launched the car of the revolution to enrich yourself, whilst Robespierre has remained poor in the midst of the monarchical treasures thrown at his feet." "Well," replied Danton, "do you know what that proves? That I love gold, and that Robespierre loves blood! Robespierre," added he, "is afraid of money, lest it should stain his hands." It was said that Danton had caused considerable funds to be allotted by the Convention to the Committee of Public Safety, in order to sully the incorruptibility of Robespierre with suspicions which recoiled on himself. Lacroix and he, it was said, had brought away rich spoils from their missions in Belgium. Not wishing to possess them in their own names, they had lent them, it was added, to an old directress of the court theatres — Mademoiselle Montansier. This person had employed them in her name, but for their profit, in constructing the Opera saloon. It was also believed that some of the diamonds stolen from the wardrobe of the crown had remained in the hands of an agent of Danton. Since the Committee of Public Safety, governed by the hand of the executioner, Danton affected a horror of blood, and strove to give to his party the name of a party of clemency.

III. The imminence of the shock between Robespierre and Danton was evident to the eyes of the intelligent Montagnards. Compelled to decide between these two men, their heart was for Danton, their logic for Robespierre. They adored the first, whose voice had so often electrified them with the fire of his patriotism; they feared the second more than they loved him. His concentrated character, his cold exterior, his imperious language, repelled familiarity, and destroyed affection. He was a man whom it was necessary to behold at a distance, — the less to fear, and the less to hate him. The mass of the people might be impassioned for this idol. His colleagues dared not love him. But the patriotic deputies of La Montagne did not dissemble, that if Danton were the patriot of their heart, Robespierre was the legislator of their views, and that wanting Robespierre, the republic would be a dictatorship without unity, and a hurricane without a course. He alone possessed the secrets of the *route*, and pointed out to the democracy the ever-fleeing haven at which they hoped to arrive over this sea of blood. The Montagnards could not then decide upon losing one of these two men; but, if they were compelled to choose, they would follow Robespierre whilst they bewailed Danton. They still hoped to be able to preserve both.

Some officious negotiators endeavoured to bring about an explanation between them. Robespierre did not object to it. He still sincerely desired to find Danton so innocent as not to be compelled to lose him. An interview was accepted by the two leaders. It took place at a dinner-party at Charenton's, at Paris, their mutual friend. The guests, who were few, and animated with an ardent desire to prevent this great split of the republic, carefully abstained in the first discourse from any subjects of division which might awaken acrimony. They succeeded. The commencement of the repast was cordial: Danton was frank; Robespierre was calm.

A good augury was entertained from this meeting, without clashing, of two men whose personal dispositions might lull the strife between two parties. At the conclusion of the dinner, however, whether it was that the presumptuous Danton saw in Robespierre's presence some symptoms of weakness, that the indiscretion of wine had relaxed his tongue, or that his pride could not conceal the contempt which he bore towards Robespierre, the aspect of matters was changed. A dialogue, at first painful, then bitter, and at last threatening, ensued between the two interlocutors. "We hold, between us two, the peace or war of the republic," said Danton; "misfortune to him who would declare it! I am for peace; I desire concord; but I would not give my head to thirty tyrants!" "Whom do you call tyrants?" said Robespierre. "There is no other tyranny under the republic than that of country." "Country!" exclaimed Danton; "is that in a meeting of dictators, some of whom are thirsting for my blood, which the others have not the power to refuse?" "You deceive yourself," replied Robespierre: "the committee thirsts only after justice, and only watches over bad citizens. But are those good citizens who desire to disarm the republic in the midst of the combat, and who boast of the grace of indulgence, when we accept for them the odium and responsibility of rigour?" "Is that an allusion?" said Danton. "No! it is an accusation!" said Robespierre. "Your friends desire my death. Your party desires the death of the republic." Parties interposed between them. They brought them back to moderation, almost to good-will. "Not only," said Robespierre, "does the Committee of Public Safety not desire your head, but they desire ardently to strengthen the government with the highest ascendency of La Montagne. Would I be here if I desired your head? Would I offer my hand to him whose assassination I meditated? Calumny is sown between us, Danton; be cautious of it! By taking one's friends for one's enemies, we oblige them sometimes to become such. Let us see; cannot we understand each other? Is it necessary that power should be terrible, or not, when danger is extreme?" "Yes," said Danton; "but it ought not to be implacable. The anger of the people is a movement. Your scaffolds are a system. The revolutionary tribunal that I invented was a rampart, a bulwark—you make it a slaughter-house. You strike without discrimination." "September made no selection," said Robespierre, sneeringly. "September," resumed Danton, "was a thoughtless instinct, an anonymous crime, which no one can acquit, but which no one can punish in the people. The Committee of Public Safety sheds blood drop by drop, as if to amuse themselves with the horror and custom of executions." "There are men," replied Robespierre, "who like better to shed it wholesale. You cause as many innocent as guilty to die. Has a single man died without trial? Has a single head been struck which was not proscribed by law?" Danton, at these words, allowed a burst of bitter and provoking laughter to escape his lips. "Innocents! innocents!" exclaimed he, "before this committee, which has bid the cannon-ball to choose at Lyons, the Loire, and at Nantes! You jest, Robespierre; you take the hatred people bear towards you for crime; you declare all your enemies guilty." "No!" said Robespierre; "and the proof is that you live."

At these words Robespierre arose and departed, with visible signs of impatience and anger. He preserved an absolute silence during the ride from Charenton to the Rue St. Honoré. Arrived at the door of his house, "You see," said he to the friend who accompanied him, "there are no means of reclaiming this man to the government. He desires to gain fresh popularity at the expense of the republic. He corrupts it within and menaces it without. We are not strong enough to despise Danton, we are too courageous to fear him; we desired peace, he desires war, and he shall have it." He had scarcely entered his chamber, when he sent to seek Saint-Just. They remained closeted a part of the night, and during a long time in the two following days. It is supposed that they prepared and combined, during these interviews, the reports and speeches which were about to burst upon Danton and his party.

IV. Danton passed these two days at Sèvres, without appearing to foresee, or desiring to conspire against, the tempest which surrounded him. In vain did Legendre, Lacroix, young Rousselin, Camille Desmoulins, and Westermann supplicate him to use precaution, and to guard against the Committee of Public Safety, either by flight or boldness. "La Montagne is yours," said Legendre to him. "The troops are yours," said Westermann. "The public mind is with us," said Rousselin. "Public pity will become indignation at your voice." Danton smiled with indifference and pride. "It is not time," he replied; "and then blood would be required. I am weary of blood. I have enough of life. I would not pay for it at this price. I would rather be guillotined than guillotine. Besides, they dare not attack me: I am stronger than they."

He said more, perhaps, than he thought; he affected confidence to justify inaction. But, at the bottom, he no longer acted, because he could no longer act. Danton was an immense force, but this force had no longer a fulcrum whereon to place its lever, and arouse the republic. Were the Jacobins certain? he had given them over to Robespierre. Were the Cordeliers to be relied on? he had abandoned them to Hébert. Was the Convention sure? he had, on retiring, humbled it to the Committee of Public Safety. He was encircled and disarmed on every side.

Saint-Just, Robespierre, Barrère, and the Committee of Public Safety did not deceive themselves. They knew that a surprise of Danton's eloquence might arouse the Convention and recover an ascendency, as yet but scarcely extinct, over La Montagne. They desired to disarm the giant, before they fought him. The hazard of a meeting appeared to them too great to be encountered. No voice, then, not even that of Robespierre, possessed the seduction of Danton's voice. Silence was more prudent and mystery more sure. They acted like the senate of Venice, and not as the senators of Rome, — the dungeon in lieu of the tribune.

V. The Committee of Public Safety convoked in the night the members of the Committee of General Safety, and the members of the Committee of Legislation, to a secret meeting. No one doubted the horrible conspiracy for which they assembled at its bidding. Danton counted on some friends in these two committees, weak friends, who trembled to declare him innocent whom Robespierre should find guilty. Their countenances were sad, their glances averted, no familiar conversation preceded the deliberation. Saint-Just, with a more cutting tone and a more metallic voice than usual, commenced by demanding that state secrecy should envelop the debate which was about to open, and whatever resolution might be taken thereon. He said afterwards, without appearing himself at all agitated by the importance of his proposition, "That the republic was undermined beneath the Convention itself; that a man who had long been useful, but now dangerous, and always an egotist, had affected to separate himself from the committees of government, in order to separate his cause from that of his colleagues, and to impute to them afterwards the safety of the country as a crime. That this man, reared in conspiracies, gorged with riches, convicted of treason, — first with the court, then with Dumouriez, then with La Gironde, and lastly with the instigators of the Revolution, now plotted the most dangerous of all, the treason of clemency! That, under this hypocrisy of humanity, he perverted the opinion, excited the complaints, soured the minds, and fomented division in the national representation; cherished the hope of La Vendée, corresponded, perhaps, with exiled tyrants, whom he rallied around him, in apparent inaction, all vicious, weak, or versatile men of the republic; that he dictated to them their parts, and whispered to them their invectives against the salutary rigour of the committees; that it was all over with the Revolution, if the past and doubtful services of this man should shield him, in the eyes of pure patriots, against his present crimes, and, above all, against his future ones; that the worst of counter-revolutions would be that, which one would have the perfidy to cause to be accomplished by the people themselves; that the worst of governments would be a republic fallen into the hands of the most corrupted of false demagogues; that this man was to himself alone the counter-revolution by the people! This man you have already all of you named," said he, after a moment's silence; "it is Danton! His crimes are written in the very silence you preserve at his name. If he were pure your dissent would have already confounded me. No one believes him innocent: all think him dangerous. Let us possess the courage of our convictions! Let us preserve the inflexibility of our duties! I demand that Danton and his principal accomplices, Lacroix, Philippeaux, and Camille Desmoulins be arrested at night, and transferred to the revolutionary tribunal.

All eyes were turned towards Robespierre. Robespierre, who had been stirred with indignation the first time that Billaud-Varennes had proposed the arrest of Danton, was this time silent. It was understood that Saint-Just had spoken for both. No one dared appear irresolute when Robespierre was decided. Barrère and his colleagues signed the order. Silence sufficiently enforced itself. Any indiscretion would have been a complicity, any complicity was death.

A subaltern servant, however, of the offices of the committee, named Paris, had heard some words of Saint-Just's discourse through the chinks of the door. He ran to Danton's house; he told him that his name, which had been repeatedly pronounced in the assembly of the three councils, ought to make him fear some sinister resolution against himself. He offered him a safe asylum, where he might let the storm blow over. The young spouse of Danton, clear-sighted through her tenderness, threw herself, in tears, at the feet of her husband, and conjured him, by his love for her and for his children, to listen to this warning of fate, and to shelter himself, for some days, against his enemies. Whether it were from incredulity of this advice, from the humiliation of avoiding death, or from weariness of living in those pangs which Cæsar found worse than death itself, Danton refused. "They will deliberate a long time before striking a man like me," said he; "they will deliberate always, and it is I who will surprise them." He dismissed Paris. He read some pages, and retired to repose. At six in the morning the *gens d'armes* knocked at his door, and presented the order of the committee to him. "They dare then," said he, crushing the order in his hand. "Very well! they are bolder than I supposed them to be!" He dressed himself; convulsively embraced his wife, quieted her fears for his fate, conjured her to live, and followed the *gens d'armes*, who conducted him to the prison of the Luxembourg.

At the same hour they tore Camille Desmoulins from the arms of Lucile. "I go to the dungeon," said he, "to lament with the victims: my only regret will be not to have been able to save them!"

Philippeaux, Lacroix, and Westermann entered the Luxembourg at the same moment. Hérault de Séchelles, Fabre d'Eglantine, Chabot, and de Launay were already there. The name of Danton astonished the prison. The *détenus* of every faction, and above all of the royalists, flocked to contemplate this great derision of the republic. This mockery of fate was the feeling which appeared most to humiliate Danton, and which he endeavoured to get rid of with the greatest solicitude. "Well, yes," said he, raising his head, and affecting false bursts of laughter, which were foreign to his situation, "it is Danton! look at him well. The trick is well played; I own it. I would never have believed that Robespierre would have juggled me thus. We must know how to praise our enemies, when they conduct themselves as statesmen. For the rest, he has done well," said he to the royalists who surrounded him. "Some days hence, I will deliver you all. I enter here for having desired to terminate your misery and captivity:" seeking, by this discourse, to deaden the horror which his name inspired, and to conciliate to himself even the interest of his victims. His feigned good nature joined all hearts. The royalists were reduced to have no longer any choice but between their enemies.

VI. Danton and his friend Lacroix were thrown into the same cell. "We arrested!" exclaimed Lacroix; "who ever would have dared to foresee it?" "I," said Danton. "What! you knew it, and you have not acted?" resumed Lacroix. "Their cowardice quieted my fears," replied Danton: "I have been deceived by their base policy!" He desired, towards the middle of the day, to take exercise, like the rest of the *détenus*, in the corridors. The gaolers dared not refuse some steps in the prison to the man who ruled the Convention on the evening before. Hérault de Séchelles ran and embraced him. Danton affected indifference and gaiety. "When men do foolish things," said he, shrugging his shoulders at Hérault de Séchelles, "they must know how to laugh at them." Then, perceiving Thomas Paine, the American democrat, he approached him, and said with sorrow, "That which you have done for your country, I have endeavoured to do for mine. I have been less fortunate than you, but not more culpable." He afterwards returned towards a group of his friends, who were lamenting their fate, and addressing himself to Camille Desmoulins, who was knocking his head against the walls, "Of what use are these tears?" said he to him. "Should they send us to the scaffold, let us walk there gaily."

The accused were not long permitted to converse together. The order arrived to shut them up in separate cells. That of Danton was in the vicinity of those of Lacroix and of Camille Desmoulins. Constantly fixed at the bars of his window, Danton incessantly addressed his friends aloud, that he might be heard by the prisoners who inhabited the other stories, or who perambulated in the courts. His courage required spectators. His window was his tribune. He was on the stage even in his dungeon. The fever of his soul revealed itself in the pulsations of his ideas, and in the agitation of his discourse. A man of tumult, he was not of those dispositions which gather strength in silence, and who require only their conscience for a witness. A clamorous misfortune was necessary to him, and the popularity of distress. His loquacity importuned the prison.

VII. The report of the accusation of Danton and his friends spread, with the day, throughout Paris. No one would credit this excess of temerity of the Committee of Public Safety. Danton arrested, appeared the sacrilege of the Revolution. This temerity itself, however, showed the feeling of immense power in those who had displayed it. People knew not whether to murmur or applaud. They were silent while awaiting the explanation. The Convention slowly assembled. Secret whispers announced that its members communicated furtively to each other the recital, the conjectures, and the impressions of the events of the night. Their thoughts were stamped upon their foreheads. Legendre appeared. He was Danton's most courageous friend.

"Citizens," said he, "four members of this assembly have been arrested this night. Danton is one of them. I am ignorant of the names of the others. What signifies names if they are guilty? but I am come to demand that they may be heard, tried, condemned, or acquitted by you. Citizens! I am but the fruit of the genius of liberty,—I am exclusively its work,—and I shall develop my proposition with the greatest simplicity. Do not expect from me more than the burst of a sentiment. Citizens! I declare that I believe Danton to be as pure as myself, and nobody here has ever suspected my probity!" At these words a murmur of disapprobation revealed the bad renown of Danton. Legendre began to be alarmed. Silence, however, was restored at the voice of the president. Legendre resumed.

"I shall not apostrophise any member of the Committee of Public Safety, but I have a right to fear that personal aversion may deprive men of liberty, who have rendered it the greatest and most useful services. It belongs to me to say this of the man who, in 1792, caused all France to rise by the energetic measures of which he availed himself to excite the people,—of the man who caused pain of death to be decreed against whomsoever would not give arms, or would not turn them against the enemy. No! I cannot, I avow it, believe him guilty; and here I desire to recall the reciprocal oath which we took in 1790,—an oath which engaged him, of us two, who should see the other weaken in, or survive his attachment to, the cause of the people, to poignard him instantly; an oath which, to this day, I love to remember! I repeat it. I believe Danton as pure as myself. He has been in irons since last night. It is feared that his voice would confound his accusers. I demand, consequently, that before you should hear any report, the *détenus* may be cited and heard by us."

VIII. Robespierre must have been lost in this first act of his tyranny, if he had not arrived in the Assembly at the moment when Legendre spoke. The stupor of the Assembly, changing into indignation at the voice of Legendre, was ready to cite Danton as a living witness of the audacity of the Committee. The soul of Danton, steeped in the dungeon and in anger, might produce those explosions which overcome tyranny. The Assembly could not have resisted the spectacle of Danton a captive, showing his enchained arms to his colleagues, adjuring his friends, and crushing his accusers. Robespierre felt his danger with the momentary instinct which the habit of popular assemblies, and the desire to conquer affords. He rushed to the tribune, making his steps resound strongly upon the steps, like a man who assures his footing.

"Citizens!" said he, "from the agitation which, for a length of time unknown, now reigns in this assembly—from the confusion which the first words of him who has spoken before the last voter have produced,—it is easy to perceive, in effect, that a great interest is here in debate,—that it is a matter of question to know to-day, if certain men ought to sway the country. What then is this change which appears to have manifested itself in the principles of the members of this assembly, above all, of those who sit on a side which derives honour from having been the asylum of the most intrepid defenders of liberty? Why? Because it is a question to-day to know whether some ambitious hypocrites should rule over the interest of the French people. (Applause.) And what! have we not then made so many heroic sacrifices, in the number of which we must count these acts of painful severity, have we only made these sacrifices to return under the yoke of some *intrigants* who pretended to rule? What signify to me the beautiful discourses, and the praises one bestows upon one's-self and one's friends. A too long and too painful experience has taught us the value which we ought to put upon such oratorical commonplaces. It is not asked any more what a man and his friends boast of having done in such an epoch, in such a particular circumstance of the Revolution, we want to know what they have done in the whole course of their political career. (Applause.) Legendre appears to have been ignorant of the names of those who are arrested; all the Convention know them. His friend Lacroix is of the number of these *détenus.* Why does he feign ignorance of this? Because he knows that he cannot, without want of modesty, defend Lacroix. He has spoken of Danton, because he doubtless believes that a privilege is attached to that name. No! we will not have privileges. No! we will not have idols! (Long-continued applause.) We shall see this day, if the Convention knows how to break a pretended idol long since rotten; or if, in its fall, it will crush the Convention and the French people. What has been said of Danton, might it not equally be applied to Brissot, to Pétion, to Chabot, and to Hébert himself, and to many others who have filled France with the ostentatious noise of their deceitful patriotism! What privilege would he have then? In what is Danton superior to his colleagues? to Chabot, to Fabre d'Eglantine, his friend and his confidant, whose ardent defender he has been? in what is he superior to his co-citizens? is it because some deceived individuals, and others who were not so, are grouped around him, to march in his suite to fortune and power? The more he has deceived the patriots who had confidence in him, the more ought he to feel the severity of the friends of liberty.

"Citizens, this is the moment to tell the truth. I only recognise in what has been said the sinister presage of the ruin of liberty and of the fall of principle. What are these men, in fact, who sacrifice to personal friendships, perhaps to fear, the interests of the country? — who, at the moment when equality triumphs, dare attempt to annihilate it within these walls? What have you done that you have not done freely, — which has not saved the republic — which has not been approved of by all France? They wish to make us dread that the people should perish victims of the Committees which have emanated from the National Convention, and which they desire to separate from it; for all those who defend its dignity are devoted to calumny. They fear that the *détenus* should be oppressed; they mistrust then the national justice and the men who have obtained the confidence of the National Convention. They mistrust the Convention which has bestowed this confidence upon them, and the public opinion which has sanctioned it. I say that whosoever vacillates at this moment is guilty, for innocence never dreaded public scrutiny. (Applause.) And they desired also to inspire me with terror; they would make me believe that in approaching Danton, danger would accrue to myself. They have shown him forth to me as a man whom I ought to hug as a shield which could protect me; as a rampart which, once overthrown, would leave me exposed to the shafts of my enemies. They have written to me; they have beset me with their discourses. They thought that the remembrance of an ancient union, that an old faith in false virtues, would determine me to relax my zeal and my passion for liberty. Very well—I declare that none of these motives has caused the slightest impression on my mind. I declare that if it were true that the perils of Danton should become mine; that if they had caused the aristocracy to take one step farther to reach me, I should not regard that circumstance as a public calamity. What signifies danger to me? — my life is my country's — I am free from fear, and if I should die, it would be without reproach and without ignominy. (Lengthened applause.) I discerned in the flattery which has been displayed to me, in the caresses of those who surrounded Danton, only certain signs of the terror which they experienced even before they were menaced.

"And I also have been the friend of Pétion; after he unmasked himself, I abandoned him. I have also had intimacy with Roland; he was a traitor, and I denounced him. Danton desires to take their place, and he is no more, in my eyes, than an enemy of the country. (Applause.) It is here, without doubt, that some courage and greatness of soul is required by us. Common minds or guilty men dread to see the fall of their fellows, because, having no longer before them a barrier of the guilty, they remain more exposed to the light of truth. But if there exist vulgar souls in this assembly, there are also heroic ones; since it directs the destiny of the land, and annihilates all factions. The number of guilty is not so great!"

IX. This discourse possessed, at least, the grandeur of hatred. Robespierre, if he had affected the hypocrisy of which he was accused, might have concealed it and been silent, leaving to an anonymous committee the responsibility, the odium, and the danger of the act. He presented himself alone to shield the Committee, and to struggle, body to body, with the powerful renown of Danton. His speech checked the murmurs and boasted independence of La Montagne. They felt his superiority; they feigned conviction. Legendre, whose courage melted at the appeals and menacing glances of Robespierre, trembled at each word, lest the conclusion of the orator should be an act of accusation against himself. He hastened to appease him whom he had just encountered. He stammered out some phrases broken by fear, and conjured Robespierre not to believe him capable of sacrificing liberty to a man.. Never did heart fail more to the friend, nor tongue to the orator. Legendre broke completely down in presence of the Assembly. The endeavours of Danton's friends fell with Legendre. Saint-Just then appeared in the tribune. His assurance and external imperturbability gave to the arbitrary man the appearance of intrepid justice. Saint-Just pronounced in a grave and monotonous voice, as if in reflected speech, the report premeditated between him and Robespierre, upon the conspiracies which besieged the republic. He joined to this the pretended conspiracy of Danton, taking care to establish a co-relation between the conspirators, in order that the royalism of the emigrants, the anarchy of Hébert, the venality of Chabot, the corruption of Fabre, and the moderation of Hérault de Séchelles should all reflect upon Danton. It was evident that the accuser himself did not believe in the accusation, that Danton was, in his opinion, only the responsible victim of all the evils of the republic, and that, at the bottom, the report of Saint-Just confined itself, for all proof, to saying to the Convention — "Deliver to us this man, for he is the great mistrusted one!"

"Citizens," said Saint-Just, "the Revolution is in the people, and not in the fame of individuals. There is something terrible in the sacred love of country; it is so exclusive that it immolated all without pity, without terror, without human respect to the public interest. It precipitated Manlius, drew Regulus to Carthage, threw a Roman into an abyss, and placed Marat in the Pantheon.

"You — Committees of the Public Safety and of the General Safety, filled with this sentiment, have charged me to demand justice, in the name of the country, against the men who have long betrayed the popular cause.

"May this example be the last which you will be called upon to give of your inflexibility towards yourselves! We have passed through all the storms which ordinarily accompany great designs. A revolution is an heroic enterprise, the authors of which walk between the scaffold and immortality."

Passing afterwards, in review, all the parties from Mirabeau up to Chabot, Saint-Just exclaimed —"Danton, you will answer to inevitable and inflexible justice. Let us review thy past conduct, and let us show that, from the first day, an accomplice in all crimes, you were always opposed to the party of liberty, and that you conspired with Mirabeau and Dumouriez, with Hébert, and with Hérault de Séchelles! Danton, you have served tyranny; you were, it is true, opposed to La Fayette, but Mirabeau and Dumouriez were also opposed to him. Would you dare to deny having been sold to three men, the most violent conspirators against liberty? It was by the protection of Mirabeau that you were named administrator of the department of Paris, at the time when the Electoral Assembly was decidedly royalist. All the friends of Mirabeau boasted loudly that they had closed your mouth. Also, as long as that fearful personage lived, you were silent. During the first lightning of the Revolution, you displayed a menacing attitude towards the court; you spoke with vehemence against it. Mirabeau, who meditated a change of dynasty, felt the value of your audacity. He secured you. You departed, from that time, from severe principles, and nothing more was heard of you until the massacre of the Champ-de-Mars. Then you supported the motion of Laclos in the Jacobins, which was a wretched pretext, and paid for by the court, for the purpose of unfolding the red banner and usurping tyranny. The patriots who were not initiated in this conspiracy had uselessly combated your sanguinary opinion. You contributed with Brissot to the compilation of the petition to the Champ-de-Mars, and you escaped the anger of La Fayette, who massacred two thousand patriots. Brissot wandered afterwards peaceably about Paris, and you were spending happy days at Arcis-sur-Aube, if, indeed, he who had conspired against his country could be happy.

"As for the quiet of your retreat at Arcis-sur-Aube, is it possible to comprehend it? You, one of the authors of the petition! While those who had signed it were some loaded with irons, others massacred, were you and Brissot then objects of gratitude for tyranny, or rather, were you not objects of hatred and terror to her?

"What shall I say of your cowardly and constant abandonment of the public cause, amidst crises wherein you always beat a retreat? Mirabeau, once dead, you conspired with Lameth, and supported him. You remained neuter during the Legislative Assembly, and you were silent in the painful struggle of the Jacobins with Brissot and the faction of La Gironde. At first you supported their opinions upon war. Overwhelmed afterwards by the reproaches of better citizens, you declared that you regarded both parties, and sheltered yourself in silence. Danton, you had, after the 10th of

August, a conference with Dumouriez, wherein you swore inviolable friendship, and united your fortunes.

"It is you who, on your return from Belgium, dared to speak of the vices and crimes of Dumouriez with the same admiration as if you had spoken of the virtues of Cato. What conduct did you pursue in the Committee of General Defence? You there received the accomplices of Guadet and Brissot. You said to Brissot: 'You possess mind, but you have pretensions.' Was this your indignation against the enemies of the country!

"At the same time you declared yourself for moderate principles, and your robust form seemed to disguise the weakness of your counsel. You said that severe maxims would create too many enemies to the republic. You common-place conciliator, all your exordiums in the tribune commenced like thunder, and you finished by disguising truth and falsehood. You accommodated yourself to everything. Brissot and his accomplices always left contented with you. In the tribune, when your silence was accused, you gave them salutary advice that they might the more easily dissimulate. You threatened them without indignation, but with paternal kindness; and you gave them rather counsels to corrupt liberty to save themselves, the better to deceive us, than counsel to the republican party to destroy them. *Hatred*, said you, is *insupportable to my heart.* But are you not criminal and responsible for not having hated the enemies of the country?

"You witnessed with horror the Revolution of the 31st of May. Bad citizen, you have conspired — false friend, you spoke two days ago of the infamy of Camille Desmoulins — an instrument whom you have lost, and on whom you enforced shameful crimes. Wicked man, you have compared public opinion to a woman of ill-fame, you have stated honour to be ridiculous, and glory and posterity to be folly. These maxims should conciliate you with aristocracy. They were those of Catiline. If Fabre is innocent — if d'Orléans, if Dumouriez were innocent — you are doubtless so. I have said too much on this point. You will answer to justice."

Passing from Danton to his accomplices, Saint-Just pointed them out *en masse* to the severity of the Convention.

"I am convinced," said he, "that this faction of indulgents is allied to all the others,—that it has always been hypocritical.

It has done everything to destroy the republic by modifying all opinions of liberty.

"Camille Desmoulins, at first a dupe, and who finished by being an accomplice, was, like Philippeaux, an instrument of Fabre and of Danton. This man relates, as a proof of Fabre's good-nature, that, being at Desmoulin's house at the moment when he read to some one the writing in which he demanded a committee of mercy for the aristocracy, and called the Convention the court of Tiberius, Fabré began to weep. The crocodile weeps too!

"All reputations which have been crushed have been usurped ones. Those who reproach us with our severity would wish us rather to be unjust. Little does it signify if time has led different varieties to the scaffold, to the tomb, and to annihilation; provided that liberty remain, we shall proceed to the solid glory and the solid wealth which consist in obscure honesty.

"The days of crime are passed. Misfortune to those who would sustain its cause! Let everything which was criminal perish! Republics are not formed by manœuvres, but by severe rigour, inflexible rigour, towards all those who have betrayed. Let the accomplices denounce themselves by ranging themselves by the side of their crimes. What we have said will never be lost upon earth. Life may be wrested from men who, like us, have dared all for truth, but their hearts cannot be torn out, nor can they be deprived of the hospitable tomb under which they shelter themselves from the slavery and shame of seeing the wicked triumph.

"This is the project of the decree:—

"The National Convention, after having heard the report of the Committees of General and Public Safety, condemns to trial Camille Desmoulins, Hérault, Danton, Philippeaux, and Lacroix, charged with complicity with d'Orléans and Dumouriez, with Fabre d'Eglantine and the enemies of the republic, and of having joined in the conspiracy aiming at the re-establishment of monarchy, and the destruction of the national representation and the republican government. In consequence, it orders their committal to judgment with Fabre d'Eglantine."

X. Not a single dissentient voice was heard against these conclusions. The vote was as unanimous as the alarm. The fame, the liberty, the life, and the death of the representatives were yielded up amidst the acclamations of the Committee of Public Safety.

Fouquier-Tinville was called to the Committee, and charged immediately to deliver the Dantonists to the revolutionary tribunal. Plastic and keen as the blade in the hand, Fouquier had only to draw up the report of Saint-Just into an act of accusation.

Danton in the meanwhile pacified himself in his prison, and feigned carelessness regarding his fate. He jested through the bars with the other prisoners. He drew in grotesque terms the portraits of the members of the Committee. "The republic will crush them," said he. "If I could leave my legs to the paralytic Couthon, and my virility to the impotent Robespierre, they would be able to proceed for some time. As to myself," added he, "I do not regret power, for in revolutions victory remains with the most wicked."

From these words it was discernible that the revolutions had been for him but struggles of ambition, and not triumphs of opinion.

XI. Thus passed the days which preceded the trial. Danton was respected. Lacroix, Bazire, and Camille Desmoulins were lamented. Hérault de Séchelles possessed the serenity of a just man, who has weighed his life and death, and who glories in his martyrdom for liberty. Young, rich, and elegant, an aristocrat by birth, and one also of the handsomest men of his time, Hérault de Séchelles left still behind him an affection which must have added to the rending of his heart. During his mission in Savoy, he had attached himself to a young lady of high birth and rare beauty. She had been to Hérault de Séchelles at Chambéry what Theresa Cabarus was to Tallien at Bordeaux. She languished and wept now at the prison gates without the power of appeasing Robespierre. Fabre d'Eglantine, sometimes consoled by the visits of his wife, was worn out with sickness.

Chabot alone, abandoned by all, loaded with ridicule and contempt by the other *détenus*, could not support this punishment of infamy. He had not even the glory of which he had been so ambitious in death. He died hooted. He procured himself poison. He drank it. He could not support the pangs of agony. He summoned the goalers to his cell by his groans. He was restored to life to preserve him for the scaffold.

XII. Camille Desmoulins inspired that sentiment of compassion which one experiences from weakness. Light and capricious, even in his anger, the smile was ever ready to succeed the imprecation, on his lips. The hatred which he had inspired was light as himself. It could not resist his tears. He incessantly diffused them in invoking aloud the name of his wife, the beautiful Lucile. This despairing young woman, deprived in five days of her father and of her husband, rambled incessantly about the Luxembourg, in order to perceive Camille, or to be seen at a distance by him. Signs were their sole medium of communication across the space by which they were divided. Their separation had been as heart-rending as unforeseen.

Lucile was the daughter of Madame Duplessis, one of the most beautiful persons of her time, and of M. Duplessis, the former clerk of finance, and a zealous patriot. A long attachment, and a painful delay of many years had preceded the union of the young couple. That very garden of the Luxembourg, wherein the two lovers now wept, had been precisely the site of their first meeting, of their interviews, and of their loves. Brissot, Danton, and Robespierre, then acquaintances of the house of Duplessis, had signed, as witnesses and as friends, their marriage-contract. Of these men, now separated by factions and the scaffold, one was the occasion, the other the instrument of the misfortunes and approaching widowhood of the young spouse.

On the night of the 30th to 31st of March, while reposing in the arms of his wife, the noise of the butt-end of a musket, resounding upon the threshold of his door, startlingly awoke Camille Desmoulins. "They are come to arrest me," he exclaimed. He left his wife, and went to open the door to the soldiers. They presented the order to him; he read it, crushed it in anger in his hands, and exclaimed, "Here is then the recompence of the first voice of the Revolution!" He pressed his wife for the last time to his heart, embraced his infant sleeping in its cradle, and followed his guards to the Luxembourg. He knew nothing as yet of his crime, or of his accomplices. Cast, in the middle of the night, into a cell, he heard, through the chinks of the wall, the well-known voice of a man, who uttered cries of pain. "Is that you, Fabre?" said he to him. "Yes," replied the invalid; "but is it really you, Camille? You here; you, the friend of Danton and of Robespierre! Is then the counter-revolution accomplished?" Fabre d'Eglantine and Camille Desmoulins discoursed till day, without being able to solve the enigma of their situation. The meek soul of the pamphleteer was not of the temper to support, without breaking, the tragical concessions of revolutions. He left too much love and felicity behind him, not to turn his looks to life. His wife could not believe in an eternal separation.

When she learned that Danton was imprisoned with her husband, she ran alone to the door of the Committee of Public Safety. She was repulsed. Finding Robespierre inaccessible, she wrote to him. This is her letter:—

"Can you then accuse us of treasonable projects towards the country, you who have already profited so much by the efforts which we have made solely for it? Camille has seen the birth of your pride, he has foreseen the path you desired to tread, but he recalled to himself your ancient friendship, and he shrunk from the idea of accusing a friend, a companion of his labours. That hand which has pressed yours has too soon abandoned the pen, since it could no longer trace your praise; and you, you send him to death! You have then comprehended his silence? He ought to thank you for it. But, Robespierre, will you really accomplish the deadly projects which doubtless the vile souls which surround you have inspired you with? Have you forgotten those bonds which Camille never recalls without grief; you, who prayed for our union, who joined our hands in yours, who have smiled upon my son, whose infantine hands have so often caressed you? Can you then reject my prayers, despise my tears, and trample justice under foot? For, you know it yourself, we do not merit the fate they are preparing for us, and you can avert it. If it strikes us, it is you who will have ordered it. But what is then the crime of my Camille? . . . . . . . .

"I have not his pen to defend him. But the voice of good citizens and your heart, if it is sensible, will plead for me. Do you believe that people will gain confidence in you by seeing you immolate your friends? Do you think that they will bless him who regards neither the tears of the widow nor the death of the orphan? Were I the wife of Saint-Just, I would say to him, 'The cause of Camille is yours, and that of all the friends of Robespierre.' Poor Camille, in the simplicity of his heart, how far was he from suspecting the fate which awaits him to-day! He thought to labour for your glory, in pointing out to you what was still wanting to our republic. He has no doubt been calumniated to you, Robespierre, for you cannot believe him guilty. Consider, that he has never required the death of any one! that he has never desired to injure by your power, and that you were his oldest, and his best friend! And you are about to kill us both! For to strike him, is to kill me!" . . .

She did not finish. The letter, which was confided to her mother, never reached Robespierre.

XIII. Camille Desmoulins had obtained, on his part, by the kindness of a visitor of the prisons, rare and secret means of communicating with his wife.

He wrote this letter between two examinations: "My destiny in my prison recalls to my mind the garden where I passed eight years of my life in beholding you; an angle of sight upon the Luxembourg brings back to me a crowd of remembrances of our loves. I am alone, but never have I been, in thought, in imagination, and almost in feeling, nearer to you, to your mother, and to my little Horace. I only write this first letter to you, to ask you for things absolutely necessary; but I am going to pass all my time in prison in writing to you, for I have no need to take my pen for any other purpose but my defence. My justification is entirely in my eight republican volumes. They are a good pillow, upon which my conscience reposes, in the expectation of the tribunal and of posterity. I cast myself at your knees, —I stretch out my arms to embrace you; I find you no more. (Here is the trace of a tear.) Send me the glass on which are a C. and a D., our two names; a book which I bought some days ago, and in which are placed some blank pages, expressly to receive notes. This book treats upon the immortality of the soul. I have need of persuading myself that there is a God more just than man, and that I cannot fail to see you again. Do not grieve too much over my thoughts, dearest; I do not yet despair of men. Yes!

my well-beloved, we will see each other again in the gardens of the Luxembourg. But send me that book. Adieu, Lucile! Adieu, Horace! (this was his son.) I cannot embrace you; but in the tears which I shed, it appears I press you again to my bosom. (Here is the mark of another tear.)

"Thy CAMILLE."

An hour afterwards the prisoner resumed his pen:—

"Heaven has had pity on my innocence," he wrote to his wife; "it sent me in my slumber a dream, wherein I have beheld you all. Send me your hair and your portrait. Oh! I beseech you for it, for I think solely on you, and never on the affair which has brought me here, and which I cannot comprehend."

In the mean time the committee, the conqueror in the Convention, through the voice of Robespierre and of Saint-Just, was astounded at the disquieting popularity of Danton in his chains. It desired to surprise the people by the greatness of the victim, and the promptitude of the act. They transported in the night the accused to the Conciergerie. Danton, on entering under the portico of the scaffold, felt the ostentation of his indifference abate. His countenance became as sombre as his abode. By chance, or by way of derision, they assigned to the Dantonists for a dungeon the dungeon of the Girondists. It was at once a vengeance and a prophecy; and Danton recognised herein the finger of that Divine justice which his misfortunes began to reveal to him.

XIV. The trial began. All the jurors, chosen by Fouquier-Tinville and presided over by Hermann, were persons known to the accused. Fouquier-Tinville himself, a relative of Camille Desmoulins, owed to the credit of this young patron his employment as public accuser. But the eye of the committee was over all these men, and dived into all their consciences. They did not expect justice from them, but death.

The people, however, who still adored Danton, besieged the Palais-de-Justice. The crowd stretched even upon the surrounding quays to assist in the triumph of the great patriot. Danton appeared with a dignity rather theatrical before his judges. The president having asked him his name, his age, and his residence; "I am Danton," replied he; "well enough known in the Revolution. I am thirty-five years old. My residence will soon be void, and my name will exist in the Pantheon of history."

"And I," said Camille Desmoulins, "I am thirty-three, a fatal age to revolutionists, the age of the *sans culotte* Jesus, when he died."

Fouquier having caused Chabot, Fabre d'Eglantine, and the intriguers their accomplices to sit on the same benches, Danton and his friends rose and removed, indignant that they should be confounded in the same process with men notoriously infamous.

They began with these. Fabre d'Eglantine defended himself with the ability of a man consummate in the art of colouring his speech. The evidence of Cambon,—of old established probity,—left no doubt as to the fact which was imputed to those accused of having perverted and falsified a decree of finance. The young and unfortunate Bazire had no other fault than his friendship for Chabot, and the silence which he preserved in order not to destroy his friend. An involuntary confidant, Bazire died from not having consented to become an informer.

XV. Hérault de Séchelles was interrogated before Danton. He replied as a man who despised life as much as the accusation, and accepted the judgment of futurity. Hermann afterwards called Danton. He reproached him with his alliance with Dumouriez, and his hidden accomplices to re-establish royalty by corrupting the army, and drawing him against Paris. Danton, rising with feigned indignation:—"The cowards who calumniate me," replied he, giving to his voice a tone which intentionally carried it to the Committee of Public Safety, "would they dare to attack me face to face? Let them show themselves, and I will soon load them with the ignominy which characterises them! As for the rest," proceeded he, with a disorder and a precipitation of speech which attested the ebullition of his ideas, "I have said, and I repeat it, that my domicile will soon be nowhere, and my name in the Pantheon. My head is there; it answers for all. Life is a care to me: I am anxious to be rid of it! Men of my temper are beyond price. It is upon their foreheads that the seal of liberty and the republican genius is ineffaceably stamped. And it is me whom they accuse of having crouched at the feet of the court, —of having conspired with Mirabeau, and with Dumouriez! Saint-Just! you will answer for the calumny levelled against the best friend of the people. On reading this list of horrors, I feel my whole existence tremble!"

These phrases, evidently prepared and collected in loose scraps from a troubled conscience and memory, revealed more pride than innocence. The president observed to the accused, that Marat, when similarly accused, defended himself differently, and had refuted the accusation by proofs coolly delivered. "Very well," said Danton, "I am about to descend to my justification:" then escaping again, by fresh digressions to his reasoned defence: "I," exclaimed he, "sold to Mirabeau, to d'Orléans, to Dumouriez! Why, all the world knows that I have combated Mirabeau,—that I have defended Marat! Have I not shown myself when they desired to rescue the tyrant from us, by taking him to St. Cloud? Did I not enforce in the Cordeliers the necessity of having him as a pledge? I have all the power of my head when I provoke my accusers, when I demand to measure myself with them. Let them be produced before me, and I will plunge them into that nothingness whence they should never have issued! Vile impostors, appear, and I will tear from you the mask which shields you from public vengeance!" The president again recalled him to the decorum and modesty of an accused person. "A man accused as I am," replied Danton, "who understands words and matters, answers before a jury, but addresses it not. I am accused of having retired to Arcis-sur-Aube. I declared at that period, that the French people would be victorious, or that I should be no more! Laurels or death, I added, are what I require. Where are then the men from whom Danton has borrowed energy? For two days the tribunal knows Danton. To-morrow I hope to sleep in the bosom of glory! Pétion," resumed he, like a man who wanders from and returns to his argument; "Pétion on leaving the Commune came to the Cordeliers. He told us that the tocsin would sound at midnight, and that the morrow would be the tomb of tyranny. Fifty millions were deposited with me when I was minister; I grant it. I offer to render a faithful account of it. It was to give impulse to the Revolution. It is true that Dumouriez endeavoured to range me on his side, that he sought to flatter me by proposing the ministry to me, but I declared to him I would not occupy such a post, but at the cannon's sound. They spoke also to me of Westermann, but I have never had any connexion with him. I know that on the day of the 10th of August, Westermann issued from the Tuileries, covered with the blood of the royalists; and I,—I said that with seventeen thousand men, disposed as I should have planned it, one might have saved the country."

The words of Danton pressed so confusedly upon his lips, that they appeared to stifle him under the mass and incoherence of his ideas. The real eloquence of an accused man—the indifference of truth and the accent of conscience—were wanting in him.

They passed to Camille Desmoulins, accused of having bantered with the justice of the people, by comparing it to the crimes of tyrants. "I have not been able," said he, "to defend myself otherwise than with a weapon well sharpened against my enemies, and I have proved more than once the devotion of my whole life to the Revolution."

Lacroix, being interrogated upon the mission in Belgium, and the disappearance of a carriage which contained four hundred thousand francs of valuable articles; "Danton and I," said he, "had purchased linen for the use of the representatives of the people. We had a carriage of plate, which was pillaged in a village." He reclaimed the principal part on the 31st of May. Philippeaux demonstrated his innocence with the force and dignity of an unsullied man. "It is granted to you to cause me to perish," said he, "but I forbid you to insult me." Westermann replied like a soldier who does not dispute his life, but defends his honour.

XVI. The trial was resumed next day. Camille Desmoulins had written during the night his last letter to his wife. It was the final testament of his heart, which gave itself up to love before it was deprived of life under the hands of the executioner. It runs thus:—

"Duodi-Germinal, 5 o'clock, A.M.

"A consoling sleep has suspended my sufferings. We are free when we sleep; we have no feeling of captivity. Heaven has had pity on me. But a moment since I saw you in my dreams, and in turns embraced you, your mother, Horace,—

all! I awoke and found myself in my dungeon. It was just day-break. Not being able to see you and hear your answers, — for you and your mother had spoken to me, — I rose to speak to you, at least, and to write to you. But on opening my windows, the thought of my solitude, the frightful bars, and the bolts which separate me from you, conquered all my firmness of soul. I burst into tears, or rather I sobbed, exclaiming in my tomb, 'Lucile! Lucile! oh, my dear Lucile! where are you?' (Here the mark of a tear is visible.)

"Yesterday evening I experienced a similar sensation, and my heart was equally torn when I perceived your mother in the garden. A mechanical movement threw me on my knees against the bars; I joined my hands as if imploring her pity, — she who, I am certain of it, mourned in your bosom. I saw yesterday her grief in her handkerchief, and in her veil, which she lowered, being unable to bear this sight. When you come, let her sit a little nearer with you, that I may see you better. There is no danger it appears to me. But, above all, I conjure you, by our eternal love, send me your portrait; let your painter have compassion on me, who only suffer for having had too much compassion for others; let him give you two sittings a day. In the horror of my prison, this will be a fête for me, — a day of intoxication and ecstasy that on which I shall receive this portrait. In the meanwhile send me some of your hair, that I may place it against my heart. My dear Lucile! behold me here returned to the period of my first love, when no one caused me any interest, except they issued from your home — came forth from your house. Yesterday, when the citizen who had carried your letter returned, 'Well! have you seen her?' said I to him — and I surprised myself, looking at him as if there remained upon his clothes, upon all his person, something of your presence, — something of yourself. He is a charitable soul, since he has remitted my letter without delay. I shall see him — he has guaranteed it — twice a day, morning and evening. This messenger of my grief becomes as dear to me as would have been formerly the messenger of my pleasures. I discovered a chink in my apartment; I applied my ear to it; I heard mourning; I hazarded some words; I heard the voice of a sick person in suffering. He asked me my name, I told him it. 'O my God!' he cried at this name, falling back upon the bed from which he had raised himself; and I recognised distinctly the voice of Fabre d'Eglantine. 'Yes, I am Fabre,' said he to me — 'but you here! The counter-revolution is then accomplished?'

"We dared not, however, discourse, fearful that hatred might envy us even this feeble consolation, and that should we be overheard, we would be separated and more closely confined; for he has a chamber with a fire in it, and mine would be pretty enough, could a dungeon be so. But you cannot imagine what it is to be imprisoned without knowing for what reason, — without having been interrogated, — without receiving a single newspaper! It is to live and to be dead altogether; it is to exist, but to feel that one is in his coffin! And it is Robespierre who signed the order for my imprisonment! And it is the republic, after all that I have done for it! This is the reward I receive for so much virtue and so many sacrifices! I who have devoted myself for five years to so much hatred and so much danger for the republic — I who have preserved my poverty in the midst of the Revolution — I who have no pardon to ask of the whole world, except of you! and to whom you have granted it, because you know that my heart, notwithstanding my weakness, is not unworthy of you; it is I whom men who called themselves my friends, and who call themselves republicans, have cast into a dungeon, in secret, as if I were a conspirator! Socrates drank poison, but at least he saw his wife and his friends in his prison. How much harder it is to be separated from you! The greatest criminal would be too hardly punished were he torn from Lucile otherwise than by death, which at least only permits such a separation to be a moment's pain. I am called.

"At this moment the commissioners of the revolutionary tribunal came to interrogate me. They only put this question to me, — if I had conspired against the republic? What folly! And can they thus insult the purest republicanism? I see the fate which awaits me. Adieu, Lucile; bid adieu for me to my father. My last moments shall not dishonour you. I die at thirty-four years of age. I see clearly that power inebriates almost all men; that all say, as Dionysius of Syracuse, Tyranny is a beautiful epitaph! But console yourself, the epitaph of your poor Camille is more glorious:

it is that of Brutus and of Cato, the tyrannicides. Oh, my dear Lucile! I was born to make verses, to defend the unfortunate, to render you happy, and to compose, with your mother, my father, and some persons after our own heart, an Otaheite. I have dreamed of a republic which all the world would have adored: I could not have believed that men were so cruel and so unjust. I do not dissimulate that I die a victim of my friendship for Danton. I thank my assassins for allowing me to die with Philippeaux. Pardon, my dear friend, my true life, which I lost from the moment they separated us. I occupy myself with my memory; I ought much rather to cause you to forget it, my Lucile. I conjure you, do not call to me by your cries, they would rend my heart in the depth of the tomb. Live for our child; talk to him of me; you may tell him, what he cannot understand, that I should have loved him much. Despite my execution, I believe that there is a God. My blood will wash out my sins, the weaknesses of humanity, and whatever I have possessed of good—my virtues, and my love of liberty—God will recompense it. I shall see you again one day. Oh, Lucile! sensible as I was, the death which delivers me from the sight of so much crime, is it so great a misfortune? Adieu, my life, my soul, my divinity upon earth! Adieu, Lucile! my Lucile! my dear Lucile!—Adieu, Horace!—Annette! Adèle!—Adieu, my father! I feel the shore of life fly before me. I still see Lucile! I see her, my best beloved!—my Lucile. My bound hands embrace you, and my severed head rests still upon you its dying eyes."

XVII. Danton, reassured by the interest which the people evinced for him, resembled less an accused man than a seditious one who conveys to the crowd the signal of insurrection. The windows of the tribunal were open. Danton heard the hollow murmur of the multitude around the walls. He spoke in a tone to be heard without the enclosure. He bawled out at moments so loudly, that his voice was audible beyond the Seine, even to the curious who lounged upon the quay of La Ferraille. The words which he pronounced sped from mouth to mouth amongst the groups. "People," exclaimed Danton to the people who murmured around him, "be silent! you may judge me when I have said all. My voice ought not only to be heard by you, but by all France." The tocsin of insurrection seemed to beat in his breast; his gesture browbeat the judges, the juries, and the auditory; the bell of the president, Hermann, was incessantly ringing to impose silence. "Do you not hear the bell?" said he to him once: "President," said Danton to him, "the voice of a man who defends his life ought to drown the noise of your bell."

Beside a skylight of the printing-house of the tribunal, which looked upon the place of assembly, many members of the committees were present, unseen, at this drama. Hermann and Fouquier-Tinville appeared disconcerted. Public favour returned to Danton. He felt it, and redoubled his insolence. The members of the committee made a sign to the president to put an end to this dangerous dialogue between him and the accused. The president refused the liberty of speech to Camille Desmoulins, who rose to read the defence which he had prepared. Camille indignantly reseated himself, and tearing the writing which he held in his hand, he threw the morsels of it upon the floor. But soon afterwards, as if he had altered his mind, he collected them, and rolling the paper into little balls between his fingers, he commenced throwing them at the head of Fouquier-Tinville. Danton sat down and did the same; not, as has been until now believed, from a cynical and puerile play, unworthy of the man and of the moment, but with the significant and tragic gesture of an accused man, who has been disarmed of the means of proving his innocence, and who throws, in a fit of indignation, with the torn pieces of his defence, his blood, and that of accused companions, in the face of his judges, as a vengeance or a malediction.

These fragments of the defence of Camille Desmoulins, gathered together after the Assembly, upon the platform of the tribunal, by one of Danton's friends, were remitted to Madame Duplessis, the mother-in-law of Camille Desmoulins, and recomposed entirely by that lady, to call upon posterity for vengeance or compassion. They carried back the accused to their dungeons. The Committee of Public Safety alarmed, dared neither support a longer trial, nor interrupt it. The law demanded that the debates should last at least three days. The sitting of the morrow might be the acquittal and the triumph of the Dantonists. A fatal circumstance served the impatience of the Committee.

The *détenus* of the Luxembourg, filled with confidence in the popularity of Danton, resolved to profit by the emotion caused by his trial, to get up a movement amongst the people, to level tyranny and escape death. A nocturnal conference took place in the chamber of General Dillon, between Chaumette and some of the principal prisoners. They had concerted with some men without. The wife of Camille Desmoulins was to throw herself into the midst of the people, to excite the multitude by her beauty, by her grief, and by her voice, and to excite them against the Convention. Antonelle, the ancient president of the Revolutionary Tribunal, was informed of the conspiracy.

A prisoner named Lafiotte revealed it, and Saint-Just hastened to convoke the Convention. Billaud-Varennes read Laflotte's letter, and the Convention decreed that all who were forewarned of the conspiracy, which would have insulted national justice, should be placed on the instant without the privilege of debate, and deprived of their right of defence. Vallier, Amar, and Voullant, members of the committees, ran instantly to bear to Fouquier-Tinville the decree, or rather the sentence of death of the accused.

Fouquier read this decree before the juries. Danton rose. "I take the audience to witness that we have not insulted the tribunal." The audience confirmed the assertion of Danton by its applause. The indignant crowd agitated and pressed each other, as if to bear off the accused. If the wife of Camille Desmoulins had not been arrested during the night, if she had given, by her presence, one voice and one passion more to this tumult, the accused would have been saved and the committee vanquished.

But all became calm for want of impulse.

Danton in vain essayed again to protest. "One day," said he, "one day the truth will be known. I see great misfortunes about to burst upon France. Behold the dictatorship!" Then perceiving at the end of a passage Amar and Voullant, two of Robespierre's followers; "See," said he, pointing them out with his clenched hand, "see those cowardly assassins, — they will not quit us until death." "The wretches," exclaimed Camille Desmoulins, "not content with murdering me, they desire still to murder my wife." The tribunal raised the sitting. On the morrow, three days having elapsed, they declared the debates closed. Camille Desmoulins, clinging to his bench, could only be carried away by actual force.

The juries re-assembled. They deliberated long. They communicated during the deliberation with the enemies of the accused. A terrible anxiety weighed upon their consciences. None of them believed in Danton's guilt; all in his vices and his power. The majority appeared indecisive. Sinister colloquies took place between them, to wring mutually from each other the life or death of these men. Souberbielle, an old friend of the accused, hesitated amongst all. He loved Danton, he feared Robespierre, and he adored above all the republic. In the agitation of his mind, he walked with uncertain steps up and down a corridor which led to the hall of deliberation. One of the colleagues of Souberbielle, Topino-Lebrun, approached him. "Well, Souberbielle," said Lebrun to him, "what do you do here?" "I am pondering upon the terrible act which they desire to obtain from us," answered Souberbielle. "And I have reflected," returned the juryman. "What have you decided upon?" asked Souberbielle. "I have said," replied the juryman, "this is not a trial, it is a measure. Circumstances have brought us to that pitch when justice vanishes to allow policy to reign. We are no longer jurymen, we are statesmen." "But," said Souberbielle, "are there two modes of justice? One for the low and another for the high? And does innocence in the vulgar become crime in the higher classes?" "Bah," said the juryman; "these subtleties are not the consideration, but good sense and patriotism. We are where we are. The republic is in one of those extremities where judgment is not a justice but a choice. Danton and Robespierre can no longer agree. To save the country one of them must perish. Well, then, ask yourself, as a good patriot, and answer yourself conscientiously, — which of the two do you believe to be at this moment the more indispensable to the republic, Robespierre or Danton?" "Robespierre," answered Souberbielle without hesitation. "Well, then, you have judged," returned Topino-Lebrun, and withdrew.

XVIII. Returned to their dungeons, to await the hour of execution, the condemned threw off the characters they had assumed in public, and unveiled themselves before death. Hérault de Séchelles was immoveable as those Romans whose image he wore in his heart. A pupil of Jean Jacques Rousseau, he drew from his pocket a volume of that philosopher, read some pages of it, and felicitated himself upon leaving a world, the prejudices and superstitions of which he had combated, to make nature and reason prevail therein. No tear moistened his countenance, no affectation of firmness was visible. Westermann was intrepid. Philippeaux smiled as a conscience which trusts in its good actions. Camille Desmoulins desired to read Young and Hervey, those two poets of agony. "You desire, then, to die twice," said Westermann, jestingly to him; but the book fell every moment from the hands of Camille. He reverted incessantly to the image of his adored and captive wife, of his orphan child, and of his abandoned mother-in-law! "Oh my Lucile! Oh my Horace!" he cried, bursting into tears; "what will become of them!"

Danton affected indifference. He uttered words, to survive him, as models of his effigy cast from the brink of the tomb to posterity. "They think to do without me," said he: "they deceive themselves. I was the statesman of Europe. They do not suspect the void which this head leaves," said he, pressing his cheeks between the palms of his large hands. "As to me, I laugh at it," added he, in cynical terms. "I have enjoyed my moments of existence well; I have made plenty of noise upon earth; I have tasted well of life—let us go to sleep!" and he made with his head and arms the gesture of a man who is about to repose his head upon the pillow.

XIX. At four o'clock the assistant executioners came to tie the hands of the condemned and cut their hair. They made no resistance, but said many sarcastic things relative to their funereal toilet. "It will be very amusing for the fools who will gape at us in the streets," said Danton; "we shall appear otherwise in the eyes of posterity." He showed no other faith than that of his own renown, and only seemed desirous of surviving in his memory. His immortality was in the fame of his name.

Camille Desmoulins could not believe that Robespierre would allow a man like him to be executed, and hoped to the last moment for a return of friendship. He had only spoken of him carefully and with respect since his imprisonment. He had only made complaint, and no reproaches, which pride would revolt at. When the executioner laid hands on Camille, to bind him as well as the others, he struggled desperately against the preparations, which removed all hope and assured death. His imprecations and fury were, for the moment, suited to the slaughter-house; and it was necessary to prostrate him, in order to bind him and crop his hair. Tamed and bound, he entreated Danton to put in his hand a lock of Lucile's hair, which he wore under his clothes, that he might kiss secretly what was hers in his dying moment. Danton performed this pious office, and then submitted to his bonds unresistingly. One cart contained all the fourteen condemned men. The people pointed to Danton, and respected itself in its victim. There was something in the punishment which resembled the suicide of a people. A few men in tatters, and women hired for the occasion, followed, showering imprecations and hootings on the condemned. Camille Desmoulins never ceased vociferating and addressing the multitude.

"Generous people! unhappy people!" he cried; "you are deceived; you are undone; your best friends are sacrificed! Recognise me! Save me! I am Camille Desmoulins! It was I who called you to arms on the 14th July; it was I who gave you the national cockade."

As he spoke and gesticulated, he so loosened his cords and tore and tumbled his coat and his shirt, that his thin and bony chest was almost bare. Since the display of Madame Dubarry, there had never been heard such cries, nor such convulsions of agony beheld. The mob responded by insults. Danton, seated beside Camille Desmoulins, compelled his young companion to sit down, and reproached him for this vain display of supplications and despair. "Be still," he said to him, emphatically, "and don't heed this filthy crowd." As for himself, he cowed the multitude, not with words, but with indifference and contempt. As he passed beneath the windows of the house where Robespierre lived, the mob was doubly vituperative, as if to do homage to their idol by the punishment of his rival. The shutters of Duplay's house were closed at the hour when the carts usually passed through the streets. These shouts made Robespierre turn pale, and he retired to an apartment in which these cries were inaudible. Overpowered by so great implacability, and humiliated by so much blood which spurted forth so frequently and so copiously on himself, that he felt the compunctious visitings either of regret or shame. "Poor Camille," said he; "and I could not save him! But he would destroy himself! As to Danton," he added, "I know he but clears the way for me: but innocent or guilty, we must all give our heads to the republic. The Revolution will requite its own on the other side of the scaffold;" and he pretended to groan over what he styled the cruel exigencies of the country.

XX. Hérault de Séchelles was the first to alight from the cart. With the impulse and calmness of a friendship which brings heart to heart, he put his face towards Danton to kiss him. The executioner came between them. "Brute," said Danton to the headsman: "you will not at least prevent our heads from kissing presently in the basket."

Camille Desmoulins followed. He had resumed his calmness at the last moment. He pressed in his hand his wife's hair, as if he would have his fingers free for a moment to put it to his lips. He drew near to the instrument of death, looked tranquilly on the blade streaming with the blood of his friends; then turning towards the populace and raising his eyes to heaven, "Look on," he said, "at the end of the first apostle of liberty! The monsters who murder me will not survive me long. Send this lock of hair to my mother-in-law;" he then said to the executioner. These were his last words. His head rolled to the earth.

Danton ascended last. Never in the tribune had he been more haughty—more imposing. He assumed a lofty air on the scaffold, and seemed as if he measured out his pedestal. He cast, right and left, a glance of pity, and seemed by his attitude to say, "Look at me well. You will not look upon my like again." But nature for a moment overcame this pride. A cry escaped him, torn from him by the remembrance of his young wife. "Oh my best beloved!" he exclaimed with moistened eyes, "I shall never see thee more!" Then, as if reproaching himself for his weakness, he said aloud: "Come, come, Danton, no weakness." Then he turned towards the headsman and said, with an air of authority; "You will show my head to the people—it will be well worth the display!" His head fell, and the executioner complying with his last wish, caught it from the basket, and carried it round the scaffold — the mob applauded! Thus end favourites!

Thus died on the stage before the multitude the man for whom the scaffold was also a theatre, and who desired to die applauded, at the close of the tragic drama of his life, as he had been at the beginning and in the middle. His only deficiency as a great man was virtue. He had its nature, cause, genius, exterior, destiny, death, but not its conscience. He played the great man, but was not one. There is no greatness in a part — there is greatness only in the actual faith. Danton had the feeling, frequently the passion of liberty, but not the faith, for internally he professed no worship but that of renown.

The Revolution was with him an instinct and not a religion. He served it as the wind serves the tempest, by elevating the foam and sporting with the waves. He only understood its movement and not its direction. He had its intoxication rather than its love. He represented the masses and not the superiorities of the epoch. He displayed the agitation, force, ferocity, generosity, all in turns, of these masses. A man of temperament rather than of thought, more elemental than intelligent, he was still a statesman, beyond any of those who tried to handle and manage men and things in those times of Utopianism. He was even a greater statesman than Mirabeau, if by that appellation we mean the man who understands the mechanism of government independently of its ideal: he had political instinct. He had drawn from Machiavelli those maxims which teach all that power or tyranny may effect in states. He knew the vices and weaknesses of people, but not their virtues. He understood nothing of what forms the holiness of governments, for he did not see God in men, but merely chance. He was one of the admirers of *ancient fortune*, who adored in her the deity of success only. He felt his value as a statesman, with the greater complacency as democracy was further beneath him. He admired himself as a giant amongst the dwarfs of people. He displayed his superiority as a *parvenu* of genius, and was astonished at himself. He crushed others, proclaiming himself to be the head of the republic. After having caressed popularity, he braved it as a wild beast which he dared to devour him. His vice was as bold as his brow. He had pushed political distrust even to crime in the tolerated days of September. He had defied remorse, but it overcame him — he was beset by it. Blood followed his footsteps. A secret horror mingled with the admiration he inspired. He felt this, and sought to separate himself from his past. Uncultivated in his nature, he had impulses of humanity as he had of fury. He had low vices but generous passions — in a word, he had a heart. This heart in his latter days returned to God through sensibility, pity, and love. He deserved at the same time curses and pity. He was the Colossus of the Revolution, — the head of gold, bosom of flesh, loins of brass, feet of clay. He prostrated, the apex of the Convention appeared lowered. He had been its clouds, lightning — thunder. In losing him the Mountain lost its summit.

## BOOK LVI.

I. Danton was hardly dead when terror appeared to revive from the very efforts which he had made to appease it. Twenty-seven accused, of all ranks, of all opinions, and of each sex, crammed together *pêle-mêle* in the prison of the Luxembourg, under pretext of conspiracy, were conducted to the Revolutionary Tribunal. There were the General Arthur Dillon, Chaumette, the aides-de-camp of Ronsin, General Beysser, the Bishop of Paris, Gobel; the two comedians Grammont, the son and the father; Lapalus, the widow of Hébert, and lastly, the wife of Camille Desmoulins. Their common crime was limited to some imprudent aspirations for their own deliverance, or for the deliverance of those who were dear to them. Their real crime was the disquietude which the emotion of the people at the voice of Danton had caused in the evening to the masters of the Convention. They desired to shed blood plentifully upon the ashes of the tribune, to extinguish them.

Almost all were condemned. The young nun who bore the name of Hébert did not attempt to avoid her fate. She desired not to prolong a life, stifled from infancy in the cloister, disgraced in the world by the name she bore, and divided between horror and love for the memory of her husband, — unhappy, in fact, on every point. "I owed nothing to the Revolution but a gleam of liberty and unhappiness," said she, to her companion in grief, Lucile Desmoulins; "it is frightful to love a man whom all the world abhors. His memory will never be forgiven me; I shall die to expiate perhaps the excesses which I have the most deplored. You, Madame," added she, "you are happy. No charge can arise against you. You will not be taken from your children, — you will live." Lucile Desmoulins did not indulge this hope. She had learned from the death of her husband the value of Robespierre's friendships. "The cowards will kill me," replied she to her companion of the scaffold; "but they know not that the blood of a woman causes indignation to rise in the souls of a people. Was it not the blood of a woman which drove for ever the Tarquins and the decemvirs from Rome? Let them kill me, and let tyranny fall with me." These two widows of the two men who reviled each other a few days previously, and whose mutual animosity had led to their common destruction, exemplified one of the most cruel sports of fate. They had perhaps applauded, some months before, the sacrifice of the queen, and the death of Madame Roland. They now comprehended misery by their own hearts. Crime and vengeance were akin in these catastrophes of terror, when days did the work of years. In vain the mother of Lucile, the beautiful and unfortunate Madame Duplessis, addressed herself to all the friends of Robespierre, in order to awaken in him a remembrance of their former relationship. Every door was closed to the name of the relatives of Camille and of Danton.

"Robespierre," she wrote at last, "is it not enough to have assassinated your best friend, do you desire also the blood of his wife, of my daughter? Your monster Fouquier-Tinville has just ordered her to be led to the scaffold. Two hours more, and she will not be in existence. Robespierre, if you are not a tiger in human shape, — if the blood of Camille has not inebriated you to the point of losing your reason entirely, — if you recall still our evenings of intimacy, — if you recall to yourself the caresses you lavished upon the little Horace, and how you delighted to hold him upon your knees,—and if you remember that you were to have been my son-in-law, spare an innocent victim! But if thy fury is that of a lion, come and take us also; myself, Adèle, (her other daughter,) and Horace; come and tear us away, with thy hands still reeking with the blood of Camille. Come, come, and let one single tomb reunite us all!"

II. This letter remained unanswered. Robespierre, to whom his fatal concessions to a popularity which he ought to have repudiated at this price, left neither right of possessing memory, indulgence, or pity, either did not receive it, or feigned ignorance. He was silent. Lucile, seated by the side of Madame Hébert in the car of the condemned, was conducted to the scaffold. She did not die for glory, but for her love. It was not opinion, it was nature that death struck in her. She was bewailed, and was, perhaps, the victim most bitterly avenged some months afterwards. This blood of woman discoloured the other. It ranked a whole sex against the assassins of youth, innocence, and love. The death of Lucile was the most eloquent page of the *Vieux Cordelier.*

III. The committees trembled. They dreaded in Paris and in the departments the recoil of the blow that struck Danton. His condemnation was a *coup d'état.* How would it be accepted? The committees knew not sufficiently the servility of fear. Their success exceeded their confidence. A cry of adulation appeared alone to arise towards them from all the clubs of the republic. The memory of Danton had no longer friends. Legendre himself redeemed by the greatest baseness the show of independence which he had dared to display. He besieged Robespierre with his repentance; he disgusted him with servility. "I have been the friend of Danton as long as I thought him pure," said he; "now there is not a man in the whole republic more convinced of his crimes than myself."

The Committee of Public Safety, ruling henceforth in the interior, directed all their attention to the frontiers.

Saint-Just, the arm of Robespierre, again set out for the army. The opening of the campaign of 1794 called the eye and the hand of the Convention to that quarter. The coalesced forces, observing always a jealous regard between themselves, and relying upon the intestine divisions of France, had ventured on no plan during the winter. They contented themselves with preserving their positions, and accumulating their forces. Their plan was to march *en masse* upon Landrecies, and thence upon Paris by Laon. Their armies were composed, in the month of March, of sixty thousand men, Austrians or emigrants, upon the Rhine, under the command of the Duke of Saxe-Teschen; of sixty-five thousand Prussians around Mayence, in the Luxembourg, and upon the Sambre, commanded by Beaulieu, Blankeinstein, and the Prince of Kaunitz; and lastly, of twenty thousand different contingents of the coalition, under the orders of the Prince of Cobourg and of Clairfayt, manœuvring between Quesnoy and the Scheldt. The French army was divided into the army of the Haut Rhin, consisting of sixty thousand men; the army of Moselle, of fifty thousand; the army of Ardennes, of thirty thousand; and the army of the North, of one hundred and fifty thousand. Hostilities commenced by a march of the allies upon Landrecies. This movement caused the republican army to retreat. The enemy invested Landrecies. Our centre, thus repulsed, left our two wings open, and without connection with the principal body. Pichegru, not having been able to re-establish his centre in a first attack, and convinced that he would not succeed by a direct action in raising the blockade of Landrecies, resolved on a bold diversion by invading maritime Flanders, and thus recalling from that side the principal forces of the enemy. During these combats, the generals Souham and Moreau passed the Lys and the canal of Loo with fifty thousand fighting men, surprised Clairfayt, and took from him Courtray and Menin. Pichegru, availing himself of these first successes, had no fear of leaving the road to Paris entirely, open, by pushing forward the whole of his *corps d'armée* to assist Moreau and Souham. If Cobourg dares to penetrate into France, thought Pichegru, he will find himself between Paris and a French army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, who would cut him off from Flanders and Germany.

This daring succeeded. The defiance was not accepted by the Prince of Cobourg. He caused his army to turn, in order to follow Pichegru, and surround him in his conquests.

IV. One single council of war, held at Tournay, and on which occasion the emperor was present, resolved upon a new plan of campaign, which they called the plan of destruction of the French army. The army once surrounded and destroyed, the coalesced forces flattered themselves that the soil of France, drained of patriotism and blood, would not produce more; and that the arms of the Revolution once dismembered, they could strike her to the heart. They advanced in six columns against the army of the North, which they expected to meet between Menin and Courtray. Pichegru was absent at this moment with his corps upon the Sambre. Moreau and Souham baffled the plans of the coalesced forces, and fought combinedly the different separated columns, of which they thus prevented the junction. They carried the victory of Turcoing, and routed the English army at Waterloo. The Duke of York, who commanded this army, only owed his safety to the speed of his horse. Three thousand prisoners and sixty pieces of cannon remained as spoils to the republicans. The glory of France shone, under Moreau and Pichegru, on the spot where it was eventually doomed to blench, after so much *éclat*, under Napoleon. The site of Waterloo was marked by triumphs and reverses on the chart of our destinies. Moreau, charged with the siege of Ypres, repulsed Clairfayt, who came to succour the town at the head of thirty thousand soldiers. He took the place after obstinate assaults, and made six thousand prisoners.

V. During these operations Carnot had his eyes upon the Sambre, so often passed and repassed, and which seemed the fatal boundary disputed between the coalition and the republic. Carnot had sent Jourdan there, so unjustly deprived of his command of the army of the North, and who was afterwards named by Carnot general of the army of Sambre-et-Meuse. Jourdan knew only how to avenge himself of his ungrateful country by protecting her with his sword and his genius.

Saint-Just and Lebas, present in the midst of the feeble corps which covered this river, incessantly threw them on the other side, to launch the war upon the enemy's ground.

Jourdan, arriving with fifty thousand men from the army of Ardennes, resolved to pass the Sambre according to the vote of the representatives. Marceau and Duhesme drove back the Austrians at Thuin and at Lobbes. They thus favoured the passage of the Sambre for the army which followed them. But, abandoned by the troops of General Desjardins, which ill-combined arrangements kept back, they repassed the river to rally with the main body. The impatient Saint-Just agàin showed the Sambre or death to the generals Charbonnier and Desjardins. They rushed forward on the 20th of May across the river. Encamped upon the enemy's bank, and abutting on the Sambre, Charbonnier and Desjardins detached Kléber and Marceau, under an order of a council of war, to go and revictual the army on the side of Frasnes. Attacked, during this imprudent dismemberment, by the Austrians, the French were thrown into the river, and only owed their safety to the return of Kléber and to the valour of Bernadotte, who were recalled by the noise of the cannon. The Sambre, stained with French blood, rolled once more between the enemy and us.

In vain Jourdan approached. The ardour of Saint-Just would not allow him to wait. "Charleroi! Charleroi!" repeated he incessantly to the generals, like Cato to the Romans in the council of war: "arrange yourselves as you will, but a victory must be obtained for the republic." Kléber repassed on the 26th of May, and waited for three hours under the grape from twenty pieces of ordnance for the columns which should follow him. Crushed at length by new batteries, which rent the two flanks of his advanced guard, he was obliged to retreat. On the 29th, Saint-Just made Marceau and Duhesme pass over. The heads of their columns rushing against thirty thousand men of the Prince of Orange, returned in disorder. Jourdan arrived in the midst of these useless assaults. Saint-Just instantly proclaimed Jourdan general of the army of Sambre-et-Meuse, and at the same time of the army of the North. He placed him over all the generals and all the corps. He gave him the dictatorship of the campaign. Jourdan brought to the military instinct of Saint-Just the science of a general and the number of battalions. He passed the Sambre a sixth time, and marched upon Charleroi surrounded by eighty thousand men.

Jourdan commenced bombarding the town, and placed his *corps d'armée* in preparation of approaching battle, when attacked, unexpectedly, without ammunition, without batteries, without support, and without established connection with all his own forces, thundered upon by the masses of three hostile armies, he was obliged, despite the prodigies of skill and valour of Kléber, of Marceau, of Duhesme, of Lefebvre, and of Macdonald, to retrograde upon the valley of the Sambre, and to cover himself anew by its waters. Saint-Just, irritated, although a witness of the intrepidity of the troops and the obedience of the generals, trembled lest the news of this reverse should render the committee and Robespierre unpopular. He had fought himself as a hero, but glory was nothing without triumph. Victory for Saint-Just was policy. His field of battle was in Paris. He found nothing impossible in what was necessary to the republic. Carnot constantly wrote to him, "A victory upon the Sambre, or anarchy in Paris."

At last, on the 18th of June, Jourdan, having reunited in two days his parks of artillery, his reinforcements, and his ammunition, profited by the confidence which his success had given to the Prince of Cobourg, to repass the Sambre, and advance upon Charleroi. The Prince of Cobourg had detached the greater part of his battalions and squadrons to go and fortify Clairfayt against Pichegru. Jourdan invested Charleroi, and cut off the villages which covered the front of his camp, especially Fleurus. In the centre of his line he armed a redoubt of eighteen pieces of large calibre, which stopped the fire of Charleroi. This place rendered itself to Saint-Just on the same day. Saint-Just showed himself generous towards the garrison. He permitted it to depart with arms and baggage. At the moment when it evacuated the place in defiling before the representative of the people, the sound of cannon, which boomed in the distance, announced a tardy succour to Charleroi, and an approaching battle to Jourdan.

VI. It was the Prince of Cobourg who arrived, and who, forming his junction with the Prince of Orange, commenced cannonading the advanced posts of the French army. Jourdan had disposed his troops in the shape of a crescent; his two wings leaned upon the Sambre, which they could not repass, and thus had but the option between victory and destruction. Marceau, Lefebvre, Championnet, and Kléber, commanded these different corps, and dated from this battle the first glory of their names; entrenchments connected by strong redoubts, and defended by chosen troops, covered the two advanced extremities of our wings, and the whole centre of the position.

The Prince of Cobourg renewed on this occasion the eternal routine of ancient war, by dividing his forces and his attacks. He divided his eighty thousand men into five columns, which advanced in a semi-circle, in order to approach the French army upon all points at once. The Prince of Orange, General Quasnodowich, the Prince of Kaunitz, the Archduke Charles, brother of the emperor, and General Beaulieu, commanded each one of these columns of attack. These columns all advanced, after momentary successes and reverses, against the republican troops. Championnet, broken for a moment, retired behind the entrenchments. The space which Championnet left void, suddenly inundated by an immense body of Austrian cavalry, became the centre of the field of battle. The fate of the combat which Lefebvre and Championnet were engaged in against these masses was veiled to Jourdan under clouds of smoke. At this moment above this smoke was seen to rise a balloon, which bore officers of the French staff. Carnot had desired to apply this, then sterile invention of the æronaut, to the art of war. This moveable point of observation, sailing above the camps and braving the balls, was to enlighten the genius of the commander-in-chief. The Austrians directed projectiles towards the balloon, and forced it to ascend to a prodigious height in order to avoid them. The officers who had ascended in it recognised, nevertheless, the perilous situation of Kléber, and descended to inform Jourdan. That general instantly moved forward with his reserve, composed of six battalions and six squadrons, to the relief of Championnet, and re-entered with him, at full charge, and over heaps of dead bodies, the abandoned positions. The chief redoubt thus reconquered, ploughed up with cannon-balls the deep Austrian lines. The French cavalry rushed at full gallop into the breaches, engaged them sabre in hand, and bore off fifty pieces of artillery. But at the moment when Jourdan pierced this hostile centre, the Prince of Lambesc, at the head of the carabiniers, and of the imperial cuirassiers united, fell upon the French cavalry, and took from him his victory and his spoils. We commenced to give ground, when the Prince of Cobourg, perceiving the tri-coloured flag which waved over the ramparts of Charleroi, and seeing thus the fruit of the day and of the campaign wrested from the coalesced army, sounded a retreat, and, in yielding up the field of battle, yielded also the name of Fleurus, and the honour of the victory to Jourdan.

VII. Twenty thousand dead bodies covered this field of battle. This victory gave Belgium again to us, and was not slow in making the French towns which had been momentarily invaded by the foreigner, return to the laws of the Convention. Pichegru, Carnot, and Saint-Just resolved to reunite the army of the North to the army of Sambre and Meuse, to lead Pichegru to the conquest of Holland, to separate Clairfayt from the Duke of York, and thus to cut into pieces the grand army of the coalition, to make the provinces of the Rhine and of the Netherlands revolt in their hand, to profit by the hesitation of Prussia; to detach Austria from the bonds of our enemies, and to listen to the pacific resolutions which the emperor began to make to Robespierre.

VIII. The only real danger of the republic, during the last months of the preceding campaign, had been the blockade of Landau, and the occupation of the lines of Weissembourg, these doors of our vallies of the Rhine and of the Vosges. The Committee of Public Safety resolved then to make desperate efforts to reconquer this position, and to raise the blockade of Landau.

The command of the army of the Moselle, destined to form its junction with that of Pichegru, by liberating the Vosges, was given by Carnot to the young General Hoche, who, by his exploits in the army of the North, had signalised himself to the republic. At twenty-six years of age, Hoche, with the mettle of his age possessed the maturity of old generals. The fire of the Revolution enlightened his soul. He saw in glory only the splendour of liberty. He seized the command as one accepts a duty. In his heart he gave his life to the republic in return for the honour it had accorded to him. The soldiers who saw in him to what rank a soldier might rise, ratified by acclamation the choice of the Committee.

Baudot and Lebas, struck with the decision and good fortune of Hoche's manœuvres, awarded to him at Pichegru's expense the command of the united armies. Hoche attacked, at the same time, the bulk of the Prussians in the neighbourhood of Weissembourg, and the Austrians encamped in front of the Lauter, between Weissembourg and the Rhine. Desaix and Michaux, his lieutenants, rushed upon these lines, broke through them, and entered victoriously into Weissembourg. The blockade of Landau was raised. The Austrians repassed the line. The Prussians retired to Mayence. The old Duke of Brunswick, who led them, resigned his command, humbled at having been defeated by a general of twenty-six years of age.

IX. But after these exploits, which had purged the soil of the republic, and placed two armies in the hands of a youth, envy attached itself to the young general Hoche. Saint-Just and Robespierre, jealous of his ascendency over the troops, and yielding to the insinuations of Pichegru, caused him to be carried off, like Custine, in the middle of his camp. Sent thence to the army of the Alps, Hoche was again arrested on his arrival at Nice. They brought him back to Paris. He was imprisoned in the Carmes. Some days afterwards, a more severe order caused him to be transported to the Conciergerie, his hands bound like a vile criminal. He had languished there for five months at the period which we touch upon in this recital. The man who had saved the republic, and who had no other crime than his glory, awaited, daily, condemnation as the price of services rendered to his country. Hoche, who had been only some months married to a young woman of sixteen years of age, and whom he had espoused without any other dowry than her love and beauty, only corresponded with her by laconic notes clandestinely conveyed from his wardens. He lived upon the bread of the prison. He was compelled to sell his charger to exist. He supported this indigence, this privation, and this prospect of condemnation, without blaspheming the republic, even in silence. "In republics," he wrote to his wife, "the general, who is too much beloved by the troops which he commands, is always justly suspicious to those who govern. You know it. It is certain that liberty might incur danger from the ambition of such a man, if he were ambitious." These confidential letters of Hoche are full of the sentiment of antiquity. These months in prison, and this shade of the scaffold, ripened in Hoche the hero, who was soon to stifle civil war as much by generosity as by force.

X. After the winter quarters of 1793 to 1794, our other frontiers presented the same security as those of the Rhine. In Savoy, General Dumas possessed himself of the heights of the Alps, and threatened from the summit of Saint-Bernard, and of Mont-Cenis, the Piedmontese, allies of Austria. The Committee of Public Safety meditated the invasion of Italy. Massena and Serrurier opened to us, step by step, access to the coast of Nice. Bonaparte, who was then but *chef de bataillon* in this army, sent plans to Carnot and to Barras. These plans revealed in the unknown young officer the future genius of invasion.

In La Vendée, the incendiary columns of the republicans carried fire and death in every direction. The general-in-chief, d'Elbée, fell into their power, and was shot at Nantes.

In the Pyrenees, the army of Spain, deprived by death of its two generals, Ricardos and O'Reilly, covered itself by the river Tech from the attacks of Augereau, of Perignon, and of Dugommier. The old general Dagobert, impatient of the inaction to which he was reduced in Cordagne, invaded Catalonia, triumphed at Montello, and died of fatigue at Seu d'Urgel, at the age of seventy-eight years. After having stamped upon his conquest rich contributions which he had poured into the military chest, Dagobert expired without other riches than his uniform and his pay. The officers and soldiers of his army were compelled to club with each other to defray his humble, but glorious funeral expenses. General la Union, driven from position to position, even to the summit of the Pyrenees, abandoned all the vallies, and retired under the cannon of Figuiéras.

The king of Spain proposed peace, only demanding, as conditions, the liberty of the two children of Louis XVI., and a moderate appanage for the Dauphin in the frontier provinces of Spain. The Committee of Public Safety wrote to the representative of the people who had communicated these overtures to him, "The cannon must answer,—advance and strike!" Dugommier, obeying this order, fell victorious, his head split by a howitzer shell. "Conceal my death from my soldiers," said he, to his two sons, and to the officers who supported him, "in order that victory may, at least, console my last sigh." Perignon, nominated general-in-chief, in the place of Dugommier, by the representatives, completed the victory.

The generals Bon, Verdier, and Chabert, carried off columns, and reached the enemies camp at the point of the bayonet. The death of the Spanish general-in-chief, killed in a redoubt, and that of three other of his generals, avenged the death of Dugommier, and threw them into rout. Ten thousand Spaniards were made prisoners.

Figuiéras fell into the hands of Augereau and Victor. The frontier was delivered up, and receded every where before the constancy and energy of our battalions. The obstinacy of Robespierre, the genius of Carnot, and the inflexibility of Saint-Just had brought the war upon the enemies' territory.

XI. Upon the ocean, the republic maintained, if not its power, at least its heroism. At sea, war does not consist alone in courage and numbers; man does not suffice: wood, iron, brass, rigging, manœuvre, and discipline are requisite; an army may be suddenly raised, a fleet, and sailors to man it, are slowly created. Our marine, drained of officers by emigration, and of vessels by our disaster at Toulon, had just been again tormented by mutiny. The Brest fleet, commanded by Admiral Morard de Galles, crossing the British coast, short of provisions, of ammunition, and of confidence, had revolted against their officers, and forced them to return to Brest, under the pretext that they were only kept at a distance from that port for the purpose of delivering them up to the English as at Toulon.

The Committee of Public Safety sent three commissioners to Brest—Prieur de la Marne, Treilhard, and Jean-Bon-St. André. These commissioners feigned to accord justice to the seamen, and to discover, in the commanders of the fleet, an imaginary conspiracy. They established terror over the fleet as it worked upon the land. Destitution, the prison, and death decimated the officers. Morard de Galles was replaced by Villaret-Joyeuse, a simple *capitaine de vaisseau*, raised by insubordination to the rank of commodore. The mutinous ships received officers, and even new names, borrowed from the leading circumstances of the Revolution. The fleet itself sailed to action with that popular impulse which then inspired our battalions.

The English feigned at first to avoid it. They hung out a bait to the unskilfulness of our representatives. Villaret-Joyeuse, for his part, only desired for his fleet the honour of fire, without the danger of a naval battle. He hoped to satisfy, by some boardings, the thirst of glory in Jean-Bon-St. André. The two rear divisions were alone engaged. The French vessel, the Revolutionnaire, escaped only as a wreck hardly able to float, from three English ships, and returned to Rochefort dismasted. Night separated the two fleets; the following day again discovered them to each other. Three English vessels bore down upon the centre of the French line, attached themselves to the Vengeur like fire-ships, and set fire to her rigging. The general combat was about to ensue, when a thick haze fell upon the ocean, and buried the fleet for two days in a darkness which rendered it impossible to manœuvre. But, during this obscurity, Admiral Howe had manœuvred unperceived, and placed the French fleet to leeward, an immense advantage, which permitted the favoured squadrons to increase, by the wind, its power and motion with all the power and motion of an element.

XII. It was the break of day, the 1st of June, 1794. The sky was clear, the sun shining, the heave of the sea not too great to render manœuvring difficult, and the valour equal on both sides — more desperate on the part of the French, more confident and calm on the part of the English. Cries of "*Vive la Republique!*" and "*England for ever!*" broke from either side. The wind wafted from one fleet towards the other, with the waves, the patriotic airs of the two nations.

The English admiral, instead of approaching the French line in front, bore down obliquely, and cutting it thus into two parts, separated our left, which he thundered upon with all his guns, whilst our right division, having the wind against it, remained motionless to witness the burning of their vessels. It is said that such deadly ardour never before directed the vessels of two rival nations against each other. The hulls and sails of the ships appeared to beat with the same impatience for the shock as the sailors; they rushed against each other like rams, approached and separated alternately by short waves. Four thousand pieces of cannon, responding from these opposed batteries, vomited forth grape at pistol-shot distance. The masts were cut to pieces; the sails were on fire. The hulls were strewed with spars and wrecks of rigging. Howe, on board the Queen Charlotte, fought in person, as in a great duel, the French admiral's ship, La Montagne. The ship, Le Jacobin, by a false manœuvre, had broken our line, and exposed herself. The French left was beaten without being conquered. It bore upon its flags, "*Victory or Death!*" The centre had suffered little. Night fell upon the carnage, and interrupted it for the time.

XIII. Six republican vessels were separated from the fleet, and marked by Howe's ships. The morning must shine upon their surrender or their conflagration. The French admiral wished to save them or be burned with them. Reflection had moderated the representative of the people, Jean-Bon-St.-André. The fleet had done enough for the republic. The representative ordered a retreat. They accused him of cowardice; they wanted to throw him into the sea. The La Montagne was nothing more than an extinguished volcano. This ship had received three thousand shot in her hull. All her officers were wounded or dead. Hardly a third of her crew survived. The admiral had had his quarter deck carried from under him. All the gunners were prostrate upon their pieces. The Vengeur, surrounded by three enemies' ships, still fought; her captain was cut in two, her officers mutilated, her sailors decimated by grape, her masts shattered, and her sails in rags. The English ships kept clear of her as of a body whose last convulsions might be dangerous, but which could not escape death. The crew, intoxicated with blood and powder, carried the pride of the flag even to suicide *en masse*. They nailed the colours to the stump of a mast, and obstinately refused all quarter, awaiting only until the water, which, from minute to minute increased in the hold, should shelter them under its wrath. As the hull submerged gradually, plank by plank, the intrepid crew launched forth the broadside from every gun the waves still left uncovered. The lower tier extinct, they ascended to the higher, and discharged that upon the enemy. At last, when the sea swept clean over the ship, the last broadside blazed forth on a level with the water, and the crew sank with the ship amidst cries of "*Vive la Republique!*" The English, struck dumb with admiration, covered the sea with their boats, and saved a great part of them. The son of the illustrious president Dupaty, who served on board the Vengeur, was thus picked up and saved. The squadron re-entered Brest as a victorious, though wounded man. The Convention decreed that it had merited well of the country. A model of the Vengeur was ordered; a naval statue of a sunken vessel, which was to be hung upon the arches of the Pantheon. The poets Joseph Chénier and Lebrun immortalised it in their stanzas. The victorious shipwreck of the Vengeur became one of the popular songs of the country. It was for our mariners the Marseillaise of the Ocean.

XIV. The more terrible the Committee of Public Safety had been towards the party of Hébert and Danton, the more implacable it believed itself compelled to be towards the suspected of every opinion. Terror alone could, in their ideas, serve as an excuse for terror. Amongst the numbers of the committee, some, as Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, Barrère, &c., erected this ferocity of circumstances as a system, and shrouded themselves in their impassability; others, such as Couthon, Saint-Just, and Robespierre, shut their eyes, and conceded this blood to the people, to entice them to the republic by their worst instincts, forcing them to believe that they would prevent the Revolution from falling into anarchy, by abutting the republic upon the scaffold. They flattered themselves, chimerically, that they could derive from blood itself the power of stanching blood; for none of them, perhaps, as a system, desired to dip their hands or their names in it. But, terror once launched forth, they thought that it would crush every man who first endeavoured to arrest it upon its decline.

The examples of the Girondists, of Danton, and of Camille Desmoulins were too recent to be forgotten. Robespierre and his friends watched the hour of suppressing this carnage.

But the Jacobins had their eyes on them. The propitious hour did not present itself. It was necessary, they said, to get rid of such and such men — suspected, dangerous, or cruel. Couthon, Saint-Just, and Robespierre adjourned clemency, cloaked justice, and made a compact with the scaffold. Their crime was not so much the having suffered terror, as having created it.

The Committee of Public Safety had only reserved to itself, in the distribution of judgments and condemnations, a sort of mechanical function, reduced to a sinister formality. It seldom denounced of itself, if it were not in great occurrences, when the trust assumed the colour and gravity of a state crime. The committee received the denunciations of Paris, of the representatives in mission of the clubs, and of the departments. It threw a *coup d'œil* over the denunciations, or relied upon the report of one of its members; and then sent the accused to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The accused thus accumulated in the eighteen prisons of Paris. Names, plots, and impeachments filled the roll of *Fabricius*, and the books of Fouquier-Tinville. Every evening the public accuser appeared before the committee to ask for orders. If the committee desired an urgent proscription, it remitted to Fouquier-Tinville the list of the accused whose judgment it was necessary to hasten. If the committee had not in hand any chosen head to strike, it allowed Fouquier-Tinville to expend in their order the innumerable lists of accusations with which he was overwhelmed. The public accuser had an understanding with the president of the tribunal. He associated *en masse*, or by analogy of accusation, prisoners sometimes the greatest strangers to each other. He drew up and sustained the accusation. He provided for the immediate execution of sentences. This mechanism of murder progressed alone.

The carts proportioned to the prescribed number of the condemned were stationed at a fixed hour in the courts of the Palais-de-Justice. The public insulters* surrounded the wheels. The executioners drank at the wickets. The people thronged the streets at the hour of the funeral processions. The guillotine was ready. Death had its routine traced out as a custom. It had become a daily duty. From the last days of the month of November, 1793, until the month of July, 1794, the calendar of France was marked by many heads which had fallen daily. The number increased from week to week. At the end of May no more account was kept.

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* Women hired for the purpose, and called openly *Les Insulteuses*.

There only remained two illustrious Girondists who had escaped, during six months, from the proscriptions of La Montagne: they were Louvet and Condorcet.

XV. Condorcet, on the morrow of the 31st of May, awaited the *gens d'armes* who were to guard him in his house. The Montagnards hesitated before so great a name. They feared to dishonour the Revolution, by proscribing the philosopher. The Jacobins reproached the Montagnards with their weakness. The greater the man, the more dangerous is the conspirator. Respect is a prejudice. The highest heads ought to fall the first. Condorcet, importuned by the tears of his wife, was led by a friend, M. Pinel, to a safe asylum, No. 24. Rue Servandoni, in one of those obscure quarters of Paris, concealed under the shade of high walls and the towers of Saint Sulpice. There, a poor widow, Madame Vernet, devoted to the unfortunate, possessed a small house, the apartments of which she let to peaceable tenants, as unfortunate as herself. M. Pinel conducted Condorcet to this dwelling at the decline of day. Condorcet shut himself up, with some books and with his thoughts, in one of the attics. He assumed a fictitious name. He never went out. He only opened his window at night. He descended to take his repast, as a guest of the family, at the table of his hostess. One day he thought he recognised upon the staircase a Conventionalist, of the party of La Montagne, named Marcos. "I am lost," said he to Madame Vernet; "there is a Montagnard lodging in your house. Permit me to fly. I am Condorcet." "Stay," the intrepid woman replied; "I know Marcos; I will answer for him." The Conventionalist was discreet. Every day the proscriber and proscribed met upon the staircase, and passed, affecting not to know each other.

Condorcet remained in this unknown asylum during the autumn and winter of 1793, and the first months of the spring of 1794. He wrote, amidst the tumult of the madness and fury of liberty, his book, *De la Perfectibilité du Genre Humain.* The hope of the philosopher survived in him the despair of the citizen. He knew that the passions are fleeting, and that reason is eternal. He confessed it, even as the astronomer confesses the star in its eclipse. His solitude was consoled by his labours; it was above all so by the assiduous visits of his young spouse, whose brilliant beauty and eloquent mind had been the intoxication of his youth and the attraction of his house. She belonged to the noble family of Grouchy. Condorcet would have been happy and safe, had he known how to wait. But the impatience of his imagination wore him out and lost him. The first verdure of the trees of the Luxembourg, which he had a glimpse of from his windows, brought his thirst for air and motion almost to delirium. The door of the house was kept carefully shut, lest Condorcet should pass out.

XVI. At last, on the 6th of April, at ten o'clock in the morning, the day being more splendid and more tempting than usual, Condorcet descended, under pretence of taking his repast, to the common hall. This low hall was contiguous to the street door. He was hardly seated, when he feigned to have forgotten a book in his chamber. Madame Vernet, without suspicion, offered to go and seek the volume for him. Condorcet accepted her offer. He profited by the absence of his hostess to rush over the threshold. At some paces from the house, Condorcet met in the Rue de Vaugirard a table-companion of his hostess, named Servet. This young man, trembling for the fugitive, accompanied him. They passed the barrier together, embraced each other, and separated. Condorcet wandered the whole day about the environs of Paris. He rejoiced with intoxication in his imprudent liberty. Night having come, Condorcet went to rap at the door of a country-house, where M. and Madame Suard, his friends, lived retired, in the village of Fontenay aux Roses. They opened the door to him. After a short interview in whispers, he re-issued by a concealed door of the park, in the middle of the night.

It is confidently asserted that he returned some hours afterwards, and that he found this same door shut and even bolted, which he should have found open. Conjectures, which equally repel and authorise the generous character of Suard, and the tenderness of a wife, alarmed for the safety of her husband. A calumny of friendship, perhaps, which grieved to their last moments those upon whom the responsibility of the morrow was thrown.

XVII. Night veiled the steps and uncertainty of Condorcet. On the following day, towards evening, a man, harassed with fatigue, his feet covered with mud, his visage wan, his eye wandering, and his beard long, was seen to enter a cabaret of Clamart. His workman's vest, his woollen cap, and his ironed shoes, contrasted with the delicacy of his hands, and the whiteness of his skin. He asked for some eggs and bread, and ate with an avidity which attested long abstinence. Being interrogated by the host as to his profession, he answered that he was the servant of a master who had just died. To confirm this assertion, he drew from his pocket a pocket-book, which enclosed false papers. The elegance of the pocket-book, which was at variance with the pretended domestic's appearance and the poverty of dress, denounced Condorcet. Some members of the Revolutionary Committee, who were at table in the general room, arrested him as a suspected man, and desired him to be conducted to the prison of Bourg-la-Reine. Wounded in the feet, by the long walk of the evening and the preceding night, exhausted in strength, Condorcet fainted at each step; the peasants were obliged to hoist him upon the horse of a poor vine-dresser, who passed on the road.

Cast into the prison of Bourg-la-Reine, the philosopher swallowed poison, which he always carried about him, — a secret arm against tyranny. Condorcet slept. Slumber concealed from him his own death, and robbed the executioner of his head. The national guards, who watched at the door, and who had not heard any noise in the cell, found only a corpse in place of their prisoner. Thus died this Seneca of the modern school.

XVIII. On the very day when Condorcet expired at Bourg-la-Reine, Louvet entered Paris. After having separated at Saint-Emilion, in the middle of the night, from Barbaroux, Buzot, and from Pétion, at the door of that cruel woman who had refused a drop of water to a dying man, Louvet had walked all night. At break of day, he had gained, before the inhabitants were awake, the village of Monpont, the extreme frontier of La Gironde. Louvet succeeded, by means of disguises and manœuvres, to approach

Paris. He entered there at last, thanks to the devotion of a faithful guide, and he braved, in the bosom of mystery and love, the resentment of Robespierre. Laréveillère-Lépeaux, a Girondist deputy, like Louvet, was among the small number of those who escaped the guillotine. Denounced on the morning of their fall, as their accomplice, a voice cried out with contempt from the summit of La Montagne, "Let him *die quietly*. He has not two days to live." Laréveillère, in fact, was dying then. This voice had saved him. But soon after proscribed with the sixty-three deputies, suspected of regret for La Gironde, he had fled under different disguises, and by unknown places. Bosc, the friend of Madame Roland, and Laréveillère, fled at first to an abandoned hut in the forest of Montmorency. They there passed the winter, when the administrators of Seine-et-Oise came to hunt in the forest, Laréveillère and Bosc buried themselves under the hayricks or heaps of leaves. Being suspected by the guards, they separated. Each of them went fortuitously to beg another asylum. Laréveillère journeyed towards the north. On the following morning, a poor peasant gave him a loaf, which he was carrying to his son in the fields. At the gates of the little town of Roye, in the vicinity of Buire, the fugitive met a crowd of people. They were carrying to the town, upon a litter, a proscribed like himself, who had committed suicide on the highway. This augury froze his courage: Laréveillère wandered, at night, in the cultivated fields, by day in the woods. He arrived at last, dying, at the house of his friend. Received like a brother, concealed, taken care of, and cured by the care of a generous family, he passed the evil days under a fictitious name, and yielded himself up in peace to his favourite study of botany. Nothing that lifts humanity towards God ought to be reviled with derision. All religious thoughts, even when they are contrary to the time, leave their immortality in their nature. The name of Laréveillère-Lépeaux will remain honoured and unblemished when we reflect that he raised himself to God from the bosom of his theory of nothing.

XIX. Another philosopher, M. de Malesherbes, experienced the same misfortunes, and more glory. He sealed his life by his death. His long and modest virtue was crowned by condemnation. After the act of supreme fidelity, which he accomplished in defending Louis XVI. before the Convention, M. de Malesherbes had retired to the country. He lived there as a patriarch, in the midst of his children and his grandchildren. They supposed his virtue to be a conspiracy against the time. They took him away, as well as M. de Rosambeau, his son-in-law, his two grand-daughters, and their husbands. One of them was M. de Chateaubriand, the eldest brother of him who was destined to render to his name more lustre than they had wrested from him in blood! They were all thrown into the prison of Port Libre, and conducted by groups to the tribunal. M. de Malesherbes had learned to die in the Temple. He died without indignation towards his assassins. He accepted the period and the justice of men in patience and hope. Ready to ascend to the tribunal, he made a false step upon the threshold of the prison. "A bad omen," said he, "a Roman would re-enter the house." The prisoners of the Conciergerie demanded his benediction, as that of ancient honour, which was about to ascend to heaven with him. He gave it to them, smiling. "Above all," said he, "do not pity me. I have been disgraced for having desired to advance the Revolution by popular reform. I am about to die for having been faithful to the memory of my king. I die in peace with the past and with the future." His whole family followed him in a few days to the scaffold.

While the generous old man went to death for having defended his master, Clery languished, imprisoned in La Force, for having served and consoled him in his captivity.

Old Luckner, long forgotten in the dungeons, the deputy Mazuyer, accused of the crime of having saved Pétion and Lanjuinais, Duval-Dépréménil, one of the first tribunes of the parliament, Chapelier and Thouret, the one the reporter of the first constitution, the other one of the most enlightened reformers of our codes, followed closely upon M. de Malesherbes. But already condemnation was levied only, *en masse*, by classes, by rank, function, generation, and by family. All the members of parliament of Paris, all the receivers general of finance, all the nobility of France, all the magistracy, and all the clergy, were torn from their châteaux, from their altars, and from their retreats, heaped up in the eighteen prisons of Paris, dragged turn by turn from their dungeons, transferred by lists at a time to the tribunal, and led thence to the scaffold.

More than eight thousand suspected encumbered these prisons of Paris alone, a month before Danton's death. In a single night three hundred families were thrown therein from the faubourg Saint Germain, all the great names of historical, military, parliamentary, and episcopal France. They did not give themselves the trouble of inventing a crime. Their name sufficed, their riches denounced them, their rank delivered them up. They were guilty from their quarters, their rank, their fortune, religion, opinion, and presumed sentiments, or rather there were no longer any, either innocent or guilty, there were no others than the proscribers and the proscribed. Neither age nor sex, old age nor infancy, or infirmities which rendered all criminality materially impossible, could escape from accusation and condemnation. Paralytic old men followed their sons, children their fathers, women their husbands, and daughters their mothers. Such a one died for his name, another for his fortune; this man for having manifested an opinion; that for his silence; such a one for having served royalty; another for having ostentatiously embraced the republic; a third for not having adored Marat; another for having regretted the Girondists; such a one for having applauded the excesses of Hébert; such a one for having smiled at the clemency of Danton; such a one for having emigrated; another for having remained in his dwelling; this man for having starved the people, from not expending his revenue; that for having displayed a luxury which insulted the public misery.

Reasons, suspicions, contrary pretexts, — all were good. It sufficed that there were informers in the sections; and the law encouraged them, by giving them a share of the confiscations. The people, at once denunciators, judges, and heirs of the victims, thought to enrich themselves by confiscated goods. When pretexts of death were wanting to the proscribers, they detected true or dissembled conspiracies in the prisons. Spies, disguised under the garb of *détenus*, provoked confidence, sighs for liberty, and plans of escape amongst the prisoners; sometimes invented them, and afterwards revealed them to Fouquier-Tinville. They inscribed upon their informations the names of hundreds of suspected, who learned their crimes from their accusations. These were called the *fournées* of the guillotine. They made a void in the dungeons, they gave the people a false feeling of a grand crime being punished, of an extreme peril avoided by the vigilance and severity of the republic. They encouraged terror, they imposed silence upon discontent. Daily the number of carts employed to conduct the condemned to the scaffold augmented. At four o'clock they rolled, more or less laden, by the Pont-au-Change, and the Rue Saint Honoré, towards the place of the Revolution. They delayed their route to prolong the spectacle to the people, and the punishment to the victims.

Thus died, decimated amongst their chosen, all classes of the population, — nobility, churchmen, citizens, magistracy, merchants, and even the people themselves; thus died all the great and obscure citizens who represented rank in France, the professions, science, situations, riches, industry, opinion, and sentiment, proscribed by the sanguinary regeneration of terror. Thus fell one by one, four thousand heads in some months, amongst whom were the Montmorencies, the Noailles, the La Rochefoucaulds, the Maillys, the Mouchys, the Lavoisiers, the Nicolaïs, the Sombreuils, the Brancas, the Broglies, the Boisgelins, the Beauvilliers, the Maillés, the Montalemberts, the Roquelaures, the Rouchers, the Cheniers, the Grammonts, the Duchâtelets, the Clermont-Tonneres, the Thiards, the Moncrîfs, and the Molé-Champlatreux. Democracy usurped its place with the knife; but in taking that place, it outraged humanity.

XX. The regular passage of these processions of the scaffold, after having been long a spectacle and a kind of sinister illustration for the streets which they borrowed, and, above all, for the Rue St. Honoré, had become a punishment and a species of disgrace to these quarters. The passengers avoided them. The windows, the shops, the stores, were closed at the approach of these funeral processions. The vociferations of the mob frightened the citizens even in their hearths, who dwelt in these streets, and scared children in the arms of their mothers. Tenants abandoned their domiciles. Proprietors commenced complaining in petitions to the Commune, that their houses had been converted into licensed places of punishment. The blood of two or three thousand victims, which had gushed out since the spring upon the pavement of the place of the Revolution as in a slaughter-house of men, stained the ground, and infected the air. The Tuileries and the Champs Elysées were deserted by the crowd of promenaders. The miasma of death corrupted the shade of the trees.

Two executions, more inauspicious and more solemn than the others, ended in arousing the indignation of these quarters against the location of the guillotine. At the time of the taking of Verdun by the king of Prussia, in 1791, the town had celebrated the entrance of these liberators of Louis XVI. The inhabitants conducted their daughters to a ball, some from opinion, others through fear. After the deliverance of Verdun, the republic remembered the rejoicings, of which these children had been the ornaments, and not the guilty cause. Brought to Paris and transferred to the tribunal, their age, their beauty, their obedience to their parents, the long time since the offence, and the triumphs which had avenged the republic, were not counted as excuse. They were sent to die for the crime of their fathers. The eldest was eighteen: they were all clothed in white robes. The cart which carried them resembled a basket of lilies, whose heads waved to the motion of the arm. The affected executioners wept with them.

XXI. The people were amazed at their own severity. On the following morning the cars, still more numerous, carted to punishment all the nuns of the Abbey of Montmartre. The abbess was Madame de Montmorency. These poor females, of every age, from tender youth even to grey hairs, thrown while children into the convents, had no crime to answer for but the will of their parents and the fidelity of their vows. Grouped around their abbess, they made the air resound with sacred chaunts on mounting the carts, and sang hymns even to the scaffold. As the Girondists had chaunted the hymn of their own death, so did these virgins sing, even to the last voice, the hymn of their martyrdom.

These voices sounded like remorse upon the hearts of the people. Innocence, beauty, and religion, immolated at the same time in these two executions, forced the multitude to turn away their eyes.

The guillotines were removed to the barriere du Trône, in the faubourg Saint Antoine.

The file of the funeral processions was lengthened daily by many cars. At one time they carried, with forty-five magistrates of Paris, thirty-three members of the parliament of Toulouse; another time twenty-seven merchants of Sedan; and often sixty and even eighty condemned.

One of the cars which appeared at a later period was escorted by poor children in tatters. These children seemed to bless and to weep for a father. The old man seated in the car was the Abbé de Fénélon, half-nephew of the author of Telemachus, that christian germ of a maddened revolution which now drank the blood of his family.

The Abbé de Fénélon had instituted in Paris a work of mercy in favour of those wandering children who came every winter from Savoy, to gain their livelihood in France, in the common service of great cities. These children, learning that their benefactor was about to be taken from them, congregated *en masse* in the morning about the Convention, to implore the humanity of the representatives and the pardon of virtue. Their youth, their language, and their tears, moved the Convention. "Are you then children yourselves?" exclaimed the imperturbable Billaud-Varennes, "to allow yourselves to be influenced by tears? Tamper once with justice, and to-morrow the aristocrats will massacre you without pity."

XXII. This same Billaud-Varennes, who thus refused pity to orphans, at a later period during his exile at Cayenne, required the pity of a black slave. The Convention dared not relent after his voice. The Abbé de Fénélon marched to death escorted by his good deeds. He was eighty-nine years old. They were obliged to help him to mount the steps of the guillotine. When on his feet upon the scaffold, he begged the executioner to unbind his hands, that he might make one last gesture of embrace to these poor little children. The executioner obeyed. The Abbé de Fénélon stretched out his hands. The Savoyards fell upon their knees. They bowed their bare heads under the benediction of the dying man. The prostrated mob imitated them. Tears flowed. Sobs broke forth. The punishment became holy as a sacrifice.

The faubourg Saint Antoine was in its turn indignant at having been selected as the site of death. The very ground repulsed the executioner. Still the proscribers did not find death sufficiently prompt.

XXIII. One evening Fouquier-Tinville was cited to the Committee of Public Safety.

"The people," said Collot to him, "begin to get wearied. We must awaken their feelings by more imposing spectacles. Arrange now that one hundred and fifty heads fall daily." "On returning from the committee," said, in his interrogatory, the obedient Fouquier-Tinville, "my mind was so troubled with horror, that, like Danton, the river appeared to me to roll in blood." In the cemetery of Mousseaux a vast ditch, always open, and the sides of which were loaded with heaps of lime, received indiscriminately every day the heads and bodies of the beheaded. True fountain of blood, at the entrance of which the inscription of annihilation was traced, DORMIR (to sleep); as if the executioners had desired to reassure themselves by affirming that the victims would never awake again.

## BOOK LVII.

I. THE character of people even survived their revolutions. The certainty of dying spread no horror over the interior of the prisons in Paris. The sensation of death was deadened in people's minds by its constant renewal. Each day of forgetfulness was a *fête* of life which they hastened to convert to pleasure. The recklessness of their own destiny raised the *détenus* to the appearance of stoicism. The lightness of their character resembled intrepidity. Societies, friendships, and loves, were contracted for an hour between the prisoners of both sexes. They lavished upon amusements and affections the moments devoted to death. Conversations, rendezvous, secret correspondence, theatrical games imitated in the dungeons, music, poetry, and the dance, continued even to the last hours. They came to tear one from his game — he left his cards to another; another from the table — he finished by emptying his glass; a third from the embraces of a wife or a lover — he consoled himself with the last look and the last pressure of the hand. Never had the intrepid and voluptuous character of the French youth dallied so closely with danger. Condemnation rendered this youth sublime without having rendered it serious. Religion, that visitor of the unfortunate, consoled the greater number. Priests, imprisoned or introduced in disguise, celebrated the mysteries of adoration, rendered more touching by their similarity to sacrifice. Poetry, that articulated sigh of the soul, marked for immortality the last palpitations of many hearts full of poetry.

II. André Chénier, a Roman soul, of loftiest imagination, whose courageous patriotism had withdrawn him from poetry, to throw him into politics, had been imprisoned as a Girondist.

The dreams of his splendid imagination had found their reality in Mademoiselle de Coigny, who was incarcerated in the same prison.

André Chénier rendered to this young captive an adoration of enthusiasm and respect, endeared still more by the sinister shade of precocious death which already covered these dwellings. He addressed to her his immortal verses, *La Jeune Captive*, — the most melodious sigh that ever issued from the apertures of a dungeon.

III. At the Carmes, a dark and narrow dungeon, into which the descent was by two steps, and which opened by a barred skylight upon the garden of the ancient monastery, were enclosed three women, hurled from the highest prosperity into the same prison. Never had sculpture united, in so equal a group, faces, charms, and forms, more calculated to move executioners. The one was Madame d'Aiguillon, a woman of an illustrious name: the blood of her family still smoked upon the scaffold. The other, Joséphine Tascher, widow of General Beauharnais, who had been recently sacrificed for having been unfortunate with the army of the Rhine. The last, and most beautiful of all, was the young Theresa Cabarus, the beloved of Tallien, guilty of having softened the republicanism of the representative at Bordeaux, and of having withdrawn so many victims from proscription. The Committee of Public Safety had just torn her from the protection of the proconsul, without pity for her complaints, and thrown her into the dungeons, suspected still of influence over Tallien. A tender friendship united two of these females, inasmuch as they had often disputed the public admiration, and that of the chiefs of the army or of the Convention. Of the two last, one was destined to the throne, whither the love of young Bonaparte was to elevate her; the other, predestined to overturn the republic by inspiring Tallien with the courage to attack the committees in the person of Robespierre.

A solitary mattrass, stretched upon the pavement in a niche in the depth of the dungeon, served as a couch to the three captives. They there wasted themselves in remembrances, in impatience, and the thirst of life. They wrote with the points of their scissors and with the teeth of their combs upon the plaister of their partitions, cyphers, initials, names regretted or implored, and bitter aspirations for lost liberty. To this day we may read these inscriptions. Here: "Liberty, when wilt thou cease to be an idle word?" Elsewhere: "Behold, to-day makes forty-seven days that we are incarcerated." Further on: "They tell us that we shall depart to-morrow." Upon another place: "Vain hope." A little lower three signatures united: "Citoyenne *Tallien*, Citoyenne *Beauharnais*, Citoyenne *d'Aiguillon*."

The image of death, present to their eyes, spared neither their looks nor their imagination.

Their dungeon was one of the cells wherein the assassins of September had massacred the majority of the priests. Two of the murderers, wearied with slaughter, had reposed here a moment, and had leant their sabres, the point in the earth, against the wall, to recover their strength. The profile of these two sabres, from the hilt to the extremity of the blade, was impressed in outlines of blood upon the damp wall, and shone there like the swords of fire which the exterminating angels brandish in their hands around the tabernacles. You may follow with the eye their marks as clearly traced and as freshly imprinted as if that mark would never dry. Never had youth, beauty, love and death been grouped in such a framework of blood.

IV. But there was one prison in Paris where for eight months past neither report from without, nor the consolations of friendship, nor the images of love, nor the last smiles of life, had ever penetrated: a sealed tomb before death. It was the Temple. From the hour when those gates were opened to allow the queen to march to the scaffold, eight months had elapsed. The Dauphin had already at that epoch been consigned to the hands of the ferocious Simon. This profaned child, perverted and rendered stupid by the rudeness and cynicism of Simon, had no further communication with his sister and with his aunt. They saw him only, from time to time, through the battlements of the tower. They there breathed the air, and they heard with horror the poor boy sing, without comprehending them, the impure songs which Simon taught him against his own mother and his family.

Madame Elizabeth, instructed by some half sentences of the trial and death of Marie Antoinette, had not revealed all the truth to her neice. She allowed her ignorance to waver in that doubt which surmises the worst catastrophes, but which does not close the heart to all hope. Bound in still closer and more mournful captivity, deprived of exercise, books, and fire, and almost of nourishment, by the subaltern agents of the Commune, the princesses had passed the autumn and the winter without knowing anything of the exterior or interior movements of the republic. A visit from four municipals, delegated by the council, and severer searches, warned them that their fate would be more rigorous. Their paper was taken from them, under pretext that they made false assignats. They deprived them even of the games at cards, and the games of chess, which had shortened their long winter's evenings, because these games recalled the names of king and queen, proscribed by the republic. On the 19th of January, the evening before the anniversary of the king's death, the Dauphin was entirely sequestered, like a wild animal, in a high chamber of the tower, wherein no one entered. Simon, alone, threw to him his provisions, half opening the door. A flask of water, seldom replenished, was his beverage. He never got out of his bed, which was never made. His clothes, his shirt, and his shoes, had never been changed for more than a year. His window, closed by a movable fastening, opened no more to the air without. He continually inhaled his own infection. He had neither book, nor plaything, nor tools, to occupy his hands. His active faculties, repelled in him by idleness and solitude, had become depraved. His limbs stiffened. His intelligence became suspended under the continuance of his terror. Simon appeared to have received orders to try to what degree of brutality and misery it was possible to make the son of a king descend.

V. The aunt and sister, also prisoners, incessantly deplored and wept over this child. Their interrogatories respecting him were always answered with insult. During Lent, they brought them only coarse, fat viands, to force them to violate the precepts of the prescribed religion. They ate nothing during forty days, but the bread and milk reserved by them from the superfluity of their breakfast. They deprived them of candles in the very first days of spring from national economy. They were compelled to retire to repose at the close of day, or to watch in darkness. This savage captivity, nevertheless, did not alter the dawning beauty of the young princess, nor the serenity of her aunt's temper. Nature and youth triumphed, in the one, over persecution; religion triumphed, in the other, over misfortune. Their mutual affection, their conversation, and their sufferings, felt and comprehended mutually, inspired them with a patience which almost resembled peace.

The order to try Madame Elizabeth was a challenge of cruelty between the ruling men as to who would be the most pitiless towards the blood of the Bourbons.

VI. On the 9th of May, at the moment when the princesses, half undressed, were praying at the foot of their beds, before retiring to slumber, they heard such repeated and violent blows at the door of their chambers as made it tremble upon its hinges. Madame Elizabeth hastened to dress herself, and to open it. "You must descend instantly," said the turnkeys to her. "And my niece?" replied the princess! "We shall attend to her by-and-by." The aunt foresaw her fate, rushed towards her niece, and encircled her in her arms, as if to dispute this separation. Madame Royale wept and trembled. "Be tranquil, my child," said her aunt to her; "I shall come up again, without doubt, in an instant."—"No! *citoyenne!*" rudely replied the gaolers, "You will not reascend: take your bonnet and come down." As she delayed, by her protestations and embraces, the execution of this order, these men loaded her with invectives and injurious apostrophes. She uttered her last adieu and pious exhortations to her niece in few words. She invoked the memory of the king and queen to give more authority to her words. She bathed the face of the young girl with her tears, and went out, returning to bless her for the last time. Having descended to the wickets, she there found the commissaries. They searched her anew. They made her ascend a carriage, which conducted her to the Conciergerie.

It was midnight. It has been said that the day did not contain hours sufficient for the impatience of the tribunal. The vice-president awaited Madame Elizabeth, and interrogated her without a witness. They left her afterwards to take some repose, upon the same couch where Marie Antoinette had slept out her agony. On the following morning, they conducted her to the tribunal, accompanied by twenty-four accused, of every age, and of both sexes, selected to inspire the people with the remembrance and resentment of the court. Of this number were Mesdames de Sénozan, de Montmorency, de Canisy, de Montmorin, the son of Madame de Montmorin, aged eighteen, M. de Loménie, the former minister of war, and an old courtier of Versailles, the Count de Sourdeval. "Of what should she complain?" said the public accuser, on seeing this *cortége* of women of the most illustrious names grouped around the sister of Louis XVI., "In seeing herself at the foot of the guillotine, surrounded by this faithful nobility, she may imagine herself again at Versailles."

VII. The accusations were derisive, the answers disdainful. "You call my brother a tyrant," said the sister of Louis XVI. to the accuser, and to the judges: "if he had been what you say, you would not be where you are, nor I before you!" She heard her sentence without astonishment and without grief. The only favour she asked was a priest faithful to her faith, to seal her death with the divine pardon. This consolation was refused her. She supplied it by prayer and the sacrifice of her life. A long time before the hour of punishment, she entered the common dungeon to encourage her companions.

They then cut her long fair hair, which fell to her feet, like the crown of her youth.

The females of her funeral suite, and the executioners themselves divided it amongst them.

They bound her hands. They made her then mount upon the last bench of the car which closed the *cortége.* They desired that her punishment should be multiplied by the twenty-two blows which fell upon these aristocratical heads. The people assembled to insult remained dumb upon her passage. The beauty of the princess, angelic by interior peace; her innocence of all the disorders which had rendered the court unpopular; her youth sacrificed to the affection she bore to her brother, and her voluntary devotion to the dungeon and the scaffold of her family, made her the purest victim of royalty. It was glorious to the royal family to offer up this spotless victim, — impious in the people to exact it. A secret remorse gnawed every heart. The executioner presented, in her, relics to the throne and a saint to royalty. Her companions already venerated her before heaven. Proud of dying with innocence, they all humbly approached the princess before ascending, one by one, to the scaffold, and asked the consolation of embracing her.

The executioners dared not refuse to females what they had refused to Hérault-de-Séchelles and to Danton. The princess embraced all the condemned as they ascended the ladder. After this funereal homage, she yielded her head to the axe. Chaste in the midst of the seductions of beauty and of youth, pious and pure in a frivolous court, patient in the dungeon, humble in greatness, proud upon the scaffold,—Madame Elizabeth bequeathed, by her death, a model of innocence upon the steps of the throne, an example to affection, and admiration to the world, and an eternal reproach to the republic.

VIII. The number and barbarity of the executions, the innocence of the victims, the distribution of spoil, the derision of judgment, the streams of blood, and the heaps of corpses, transformed the nation into an executioner, and the government into a machine of murder. To govern was but to strike. France presented the spectacle of a people decimated by themselves. The government dared not abandon the guillotine for fear it should turn against itself. It alone preserved some days of power by sheltering itself under a perpetual scaffold. Such a government could not exist long. It was one protracted assassination. Crime is not durable in nature.

We do not establish rage, vengeance, spoliation, impiety, and murder. We contend against them, blush at them, and cast shame at their feet. Such is the divine order of human society. The Revolution, armed to destroy ancient and odious inequality, and to march in order to fraternal democracy, could not, with impunity, denaturalise and convert itself into sanguinary oppression. After having overthrown the throne, it should have sought another regulated power in the people, and have organised it by institutions and not by proscriptions. Terror was not power, it was tyranny. Tyranny could not be the government of liberty.

These thoughts fermented in the brain of Robespierre. He wearied his head with the problem of how this power could be converted into a republic. Three months gave him the solution.

IX. The death of Hébert had rendered Robespierre master of the Commune. The death of Danton had rendered him the arbiter of the Convention. The perseverance and spirituality of his doctrine subjected the Jacobins to him. His talent, increased by arduous study, and by five years passed almost entirely in the tribune, bestowed upon his ideas and speech a force and authority no longer disputed. No eloquence could henceforth weigh with his. He was the only important voice in the republic. The Jacobins and the Convention listened solely to him. Although he did not possess, nor as yet affect absolute rule in the Committee of Public Safety, the opinion of France decreed him the superiority, that dictatorship of nature. His colleagues were tacitly indignant, but feigned themselves to award it to him. The Convention simulated enthusiasm to disguise subjection. The Cordeliers were dispersed; their conquered remnant sought refuge amongst the Jacobins. The Commune, entirely subordinate to the agents of Robespierre's party, responded to him from the sections, the sections from the people, Henriot from the national guard. Robespierre did not reign, but his name reigned. He had but to realise his reign and to organise his dictatorship. But at this last step he faltered. His refusal of supreme power was sincere in the motives which he adduced. But there were other motives which made him averse to seize on the government alone. These motives he had not as yet avowed. It was because he had attained the goal of his thoughts, and he knew not, in reality, what form it behoved him to give to the revolutionary institutions. A man of ideas rather than of action, Robespierre possessed the sentiment of the Revolution rather than its political formula. He dreamt of the spirit of institutions for the future, he was deficient in the mechanism of a popular government. His theories, borrowed from books, were brilliant and vague as perspective, uncertain as the distant prospect. He was always considering them; he dazzled himself with contemplating them, but never touched them with the firm unerring hand of practice. He was ignorant that liberty herself must protect herself by a strong power, and that this power requires a head to will—and members to execute. He believed that the words liberty, equality, disinterestedness, devotion, and virtue, constantly repeated, formed in themselves alone a government. He took philosophy for policy. He was irritated at his miscalculations. He constantly attributed his mistakes to plots of the aristocracy and the demagogues. He thought that by suppressing the aristocrats and demagogues of society, he would suppress the vices of humanity and the obstacles to the working of institutions. He had taken an illusory, in lieu of a serious, view of the people. He was angry at finding them often so weak, so cowardly, so cruel, so ignorant, so versatile, and so unworthy of the rank which nature assigned them. He was chagrined, and soured, and loaded the scaffold to explain his difficulties to himself. Then he was irritated at the very excess of the scaffold—and returned to the words justice and humanity. Again he resorted to punishment. He invoked virtue and instigated death; floating one while upon the clouds, at another in blood. He despaired of mankind—he was frightened at himself. "Death! always death!" he frequently exclaimed in private; "and the wretches cast it upon me! What a memory I shall leave behind me if this lasts! Life is a burthen to me." Once, at last, truth revealed itself. He exclaimed, with a sign of want of confidence in himself, "No! I am not made to govern; I am made to combat the enemies of the people."

X. Saint-Just, his only confidant, came repeatedly during every day, to closet himself with Robespierre. He endeavoured to persuade his master to adopt a policy less vague, and plans more decided.

Saint-Just, though young, possessed, if not in idea, at least in character, the consummate maturity of a statesman. He was born a tyrant. He had the insolence of governments, even before he possessed its power. His language assumed the form of command. He was as laconic as his will. His missions in the camps and the imperious use which he had made of his authority over the generals in the midst of their armies, had taught Saint-Just how easily men are made to submit under the hand of a single man. His bravery and fiery manner had given him the attitude of a military tribune, as ready to execute as to conceive a *coup de main*. Robespierre was the only man before whom Saint-Just bowed—as before the superior and regulating idea of the republic. Even though accusing his delay, he respected his irresolution, and devoted himself to him in his fall. To fall with Robespierre appeared to him to fall with the very cause of the Revolution. An impatient disciple, but still always a disciple, he urged the oracle, he did not force it.

Couthon, Lebas, Coffinhal, and Buonarotti were frequently admitted to his conferences. All sincere republicans, they felt, however, as Saint-Just, that the hour of the crisis had arrived, and that if the republic entertained horror for a tyrant, it required a power less wavering and irresponsible than that of committees. Thus as in every crisis wherein Robespierre had trusted to time and to fortune, rather than to resolution, he adopted the part of allowing himself to be swayed by the moment, believing that the oracle was in the circumstance, and confiding in fatality, that superstition of men who have been long fortunate.

XI. It was, however, arranged between him and his friends, that the republic required institutions; that over the committees it was necessary to have a supreme director of the jurisdiction of the executive power; and that if the Jacobins, the Convention, and the people decided on giving a head to the government, Robespierre should devote himself to this temporary magistracy.

They agreed, besides, in the necessity of promptly wresting power from the members of the committees; of watching and purifying the Jacobins, an indispensable point of support for exciting the Convention; of possessing themselves of the general council of the Commune, which had insurrection at its disposal; of remaining masters, through Henriot, of the armed force of Paris; of weaning over, by means of Saint-Just and Lebas, the feeling of the camps; of successively recalling from the departments the deputies in mission on whom they did not rely; of banishing from the Convention or destroying in the minds of the people those whom they suspected of ambitious projects; and finally, of preparing in advance for Robespierre a legal arm so arbitrary, so absolute, and so terrible, that he should have nothing more to ask when raised to the supreme magistracy; to cause every head to bend under the law of unity and before the level of death. Robespierre reserved to himself the right never to act but by force of opinion, not to have recourse to insurrection, to respect the national sovereignty in its centre, and to accept only that title and power which should be imposed upon him by the national representation. Couthon was charged to prepare a decree which gave the dictatorship to the committees. This dictatorship once voted by the Convention, they would wrest from the hands of the committees, and would turn it in need against them. It was this unexplained decree which was called some days later the decree of the 22nd Prairial. Saint-Just suspended for some days his departure for the army of the Rhine, in order to launch forth previously in the committee and in the Convention some of those axioms which fall from on high into the ideas of an assembly, which convey a presentiment of the depth of projects, and prepare the imagination for the unknown.

XII. The urgency was extreme, the step slippery. The death of Danton had beheaded La Montagne. The Montagnards were themselves astonished at the removal, by so sudden, so bold, and so unforeseen a *coup de main*, of a man who was rooted amongst them, and whose absence left them without spirit, without voice, and without arms, to the supremacy of the committees. Robespierre had gained by this *coup d'état* an authority and respect which caused trembling, but also hatred, amongst the Conventionalists. The man who had subdued and killed Danton could dare and do all. Hitherto the disinterestedness of Robespierre was accredited, but now they believed in his ambition. The very suspicion of this ambition was strength to him. There are vices which the cowardice of men respects more than virtue. From the moment that Robespierre prepared to reign, they prepared to obey him. Slaves are never wanting to tyrants, nor encouragement to tyranny. La Montagne *en masse* feigned idolatry for Robespierre. This apparent worship, however, was at bottom mingled with fear and wrath. The numerous friends of Danton experienced a secret shame at having abandoned him. The name of Danton caused them remorse. His vacant place upon La Montagne, which no one dared to occupy, accused them. His remembrance importuned them to avenge him.

But with the exception of some glances of intelligence, and some half-interchanged words, no one dared to confide to his neighbour his secret misgivings. Robespierre was reduced to seek in men's countenances the favour or hatred which they bore towards him. To understand an opposition thoroughly, it was necessary to analyse every look.

XIII. Among those prominent faces which disturbed and offended Robespierre's eye might be reckoned Legendre, veiled, however, under the mask of complaisance; Léonard Bourdon, who ill disguised resentment; Bourdon (de l'Oise), too intemperate in speech for silent servitude; Collot d'Herbois, too declamatory to support superiority of talent; Barrère, whose ambiguous physiognomy left even supicion undecided; Siéyès, who had spread the darkness of his soul over his countenance, so that the insensibility of an automaton might alone be read there; Barras, with dissembled impartiality; Fréron, who concealed the tears with which his heart had been inundated since the execution of Lucile Desmoulins; Tallien, ill-disguising a secret sorrow since the imprisonment of Theresa Cabarus, who bore his name, in the dungeons of Carmes; Carnot, whose austere and martial brow disdained dissimulation; Vadier, one while caressing, at another aggressive; Louis (du bas-Rhin), displaying his violence boldly; Billaud-Varennes, the face of Brutus watching Cæsar, whose pale and attenuated countenance, wrinkled brow, thin lips, and glance sardonic, and as if springing from a hidden source, revealed a disposition embarrassing to know, difficult to bend, and impossible to subdue; and, lastly, Courtois, deputy of Aube, the friend of Danton, having never applauded his crimes, but never betrayed his remembrance,— an honest man, whose just and moral republicanism had not hardened his heart.

Some friends of Marat and Hébert, deputies such as Carrier, Fouché, and of other Conventionalists, recalled from their missions to obey the public clamour against their atrocities, grouped or seated themselves discontentedly in the ranks of La Montagne.

La Plaine, composed of the remnant of Girondists, more pliable and more servile than ever, since they had been decimated, were silent — voted, and admired.

XIV. In the interior of the two great committees, the parties more immediately clashing displayed their character the more completely without disclosing themselves. Vadier, Amar, Jagot, Louis (du bas-Rhin), David, Lebas, Lavicomterie, Moyse, Bayle, Elie Lacoste, and Dubarran, composed the Committee of General Safety.

Almost all these members of the Committee of General Safety had an absolute respect for the opinions of Robespierre. Some, however, remembered Danton, and others Hébert, with bitterness. David and Lebas alone represented there the will of the ruler of the Jacobins; the former by servility, the latter from feeling and conviction.

XV. In the Committee of Public Safety, the centre and focus of government, the absence of many representatives in mission allowed the deliberations and power to oscillate among a small number of members who comprised the republic. These were then Robespierre, Couthon, Saint-Just, Billaud-Varennes, Barrère, Collot d'Herbois, Carnot, Prieur, and Robert Lindet.

Robespierre, Couthon, and Saint-Just were the political men: Billaud-Varennes, Barrère, and Collot d'Herbois, the revolutionists: Carnot, Robert Lindet, and Prieur were the administrators of the Committee. The first governed, the second struck, the third served the republic.

Between Robespierre's party and that of Billaud-Varennes, silent, but deep dissension began to break out. Carnot, Lindet, and Prieur endeavoured to stifle these differences in the mystery of their sittings, for fear of encouraging without factions fatal to the general safety. Occasionally these three decemvirs reunited themselves to Robespierre, more frequently to Billaud-Varennes and Barrère. The haughty reserve of Robespierre, the coarseness of Couthon, and the dogmatism of Saint-Just, offended the Conventionalists, and reduced them from repulsion of character into a silent apathy, which resembled opposition. When Robespierre was absent, they pronounced the word tyrant. He abused, said they, alternately eloquence or silence; he commanded as a master, or was silent as a superior who disdained discussion; he left to the committee the responsibility of its acts, after having inspired them; he reserved to himself the right of blaming the Jacobins for what he had consented to at the Tuileries; he boasted of moderation, and exhorted clemency; he defended those victims whose blood was the most indispensable to his own greatness; he cast all the odium of government upon his colleagues; he defamed them by his isolation; he alone usurped all popularity; he shackled the war policy of Carnot; he smiled with contempt from his bench at the military vaunting of Barrère; he did not disguise those after-thoughts which weighed more than his just influence in the committee; and he assumed in the assemblies a mien which betrayed the disdain or the majesty of a despot. No familiarity tempered his authority; he arrived late, he entered with a negligent step, he seated himself without speaking, he cast his eyes upon the table, he leaned his face upon his hands, he forbade his lips to express either approbation or blame, and he habitually feigned absence, and sometimes sleep, to evince indifference or unconcern.

Such were the reproaches which circulated secretly against Robespierre in the committees.

XVI. In the Commune he reigned as a sovereign through Fleuriot-Lescot and Payan: the one mayor of Paris, the other the national agent.

The Revolutionary Tribunal was devoted to him through Dumas, Hermann, Souberbielle, Duplay, and all the jurors—men chosen from that class of people amongst whom the name of Robespierre was adored.

XVII. In the Jacobins, Robespierre reigned by himself. Disdainful in the committee, negligent in the Convention, he was assiduous, indefatigable, eloquent, obsequious, and terrible every evening at the sittings of this society. There was his empire. He consolidated, by exercising, it. He accustomed opinion to obey him, to prepare the republic voluntarily to commit itself to his hands. He commenced, only a few days after the punishment of Danton, to exercise his sovereignty in their tribune.

Dufourny, the president of the Jacobins for many years, had sometimes dared to interrupt the orator, or to contradict him in the midst of his discourses. He had further murmured against the evidence of Saint-Just and the proscription of the Dantonists. Attacked by Vadier, Dufourny essayed to justify himself. Robespierre, allowing the wave of resentment which he had raised to spread for some time against him, said to Dufourny, "Remember, that Châbot and Ronsin were once as impudent as yourself; and that impudence upon the brow is the seal of crime." "Mine is tranquillity," replied Dufourny. "Tranquillity!" answered Robespierre. "No! tranquillity is not in thy soul. I shall refer to all your words; to unveil you to the eyes of the people. Tranquillity! conspirators constantly invoke it; but they shall not have it. What! they dare to bewail Danton, Lacroix, and their accomplices, when the crimes of these men are written with our blood; when Belgium yet smokes with their treason! You think to deceive us with your perfidious intentions! You shall not succeed therein! You were the friend of Fabre d'Eglantine!"

XVIII. Saint-Just rose daily more and more in the Convention. He endeavoured to increase the soul of the republic to the proportion of a complete regeneration of society. His maxims possessed the dogmatism, and almost the authority, of a prophet. One might imagine in this man, so young, so handsome, and so inspired, the precursor of a new age. "We must," said he, in a report upon the general police, "form a new city. We must make it understood that a revolutionary government is not a state of conquest, nor a state of war, but a passage from bad to good, from corruption to probity, from evil to honest maxims. A revolutionist is inflexible; but he is sensible, mild, polite, and frugal. He strikes in the combat, he defends innocence before the judges. Jean Jacques Rousseau was a revolutionist; he was doubtless neither insolent nor rude. Be you such! Await no other recompence than immortality. I know that those who have desired well have all perished. Codrus was precipitated into an abyss. Lycurgus had his eye plucked out by the thieves of Sparta, and died in exile. Phocion and Socrates drank hemlock. Athens even on that day crowned herself with flowers. It signifies not, they had done good. If this good was lost to their country, it was not concealed from the divinity! To form a good public conscience,—there is the police. This conscience, as uniform as the human heart, is composed of the inclination of the people to the general good. You have been severe, you have been compelled to be so. It has been necessary to avenge our fathers, and to conceal under its wreck this monarchy, the huge coffin of so many servile generations. What would have become of an indulgent republic against ruthless enemies? We have opposed blade to blade, and liberty is founded. She sprang from the bosom of tempest and grief, as the world from chaos, and the man who weeps at his birth." (The Convention applauded enthusiastically.)

"Let us cherish retired life. Ye ambitious ones, go and walk in the cemetery where repose together conspirators and tyrants, and decide between fame, which is the noise of tongues, and true glory, which is the esteem of one's self. The government is accused of a dictatorship! And since when have the enemies of the Revolution been so pregnant with solicitude for the conservation of liberty? There was never a person so shameless in Rome as to reproach the severity which Cato displayed towards Catiline. Cæsar alone regretted that traitor! It is for you to impress upon the world the stamp of your genius! Form civil institutions of which one has not thought as yet! It is therein that you will proclaim the perfection of your democracy. Do not doubt it! All that exists around should have an end, for all that does exist around us is unjust. Liberty will shroud the world. Let factions disappear! Let the Convention soar alone over every power! Let the revolutionists be Romans, and not barbarians!"

XIX. These lyrical maxims seemed to brighten the serenity of the future, in the midst of the horror of the times. The Convention applauded them vehemently. It was wearied with rigour. It welcomed the slightest presentiments of clemency.

Robespierre and his friends preceded the Convention in this feeling. They knew that the words of Saint-Just were but the confidences of the master carried to the tribune to prove opinion. Robespierre was in himself two men: the enemy of the ancient order, and the apostle of the new one. The death of Danton had terminated his first part. He was impatient to sustain the second. Wearied with executions, he desired, he said, to seat the government on the basis of morality and virtue, those two foundations of the human soul. Obedience to human law is but *servitude*. That which constitutes *duty* is the sentiment which elevates this obedience to God. Thus, from tyranny which it is in the eyes of the atheist, society becomes religion in the eyes of the deist. This title, by rendering the law holy, renders it also strong, since to judge and to avenge belongeth to God.

The idea of God, that common treasure of all the religions upon earth, had been degraded to the dust — prostrated in the demolition of beliefs; it had been mutilated and crushed in the mind of the people by the proscriptions, and by the parodies of the Catholic worship, which Hébert and Chaumette incited against the temples, the priests, and religious ceremonies. The people, who easily confound the symbol with the idea, had believed that God was a prejudiced counter-revolutionist. The republic seemed to have swept the immortality of the soul from its territory and from its heaven. Atheism, openly preached, had been for some a revenge for their long subjection to a worship repudiated by them, for others a theory favourable to all crimes. The people, in severing this divine chain of faith in God, who retained their conscience, had thought to sever at the same time all the bonds of duty. Terror upon earth had succeeded justice in heaven. Now that it was desired to do away with the scaffold and inaugurate institutions, it became necessary to restore a conscience to the people. A conscience without God is a tribunal without a judge. The light of conscience is nothing more than the reflection of the idea of God in the soul of mankind. Shut out God, and man is in darkness. Virtue may be mistaken for crime, and crime for virtue.

XX. Robespierre felt these truths profoundly. It is necessary to state, however repugnant one may be to believe it, that he did not only feel them as a policy which borrows a chain from heaven to fetter men more surely with it; he felt them as a convinced sectary, who himself first bows down before the idea which he desires to make the people adore. Therein he had Mahomet in his thoughts. The hour of reconstruction commenced. He desired to reconstruct, before all, the mind of the nation. With the same hand which had bestowed upon it all power, it behoved him to give it all light. A republic which ought to have no other sovereignty than morality should rest entirely upon a divine principle. In the beginning of April he went to pass some days in the forest of Montmorency. He often visited the hut which Jean Jacques Rousseau had inhabited. It was in this house and in this garden that he finished his report, under those very trees where his master had so magnificently written of God.

XXI. On the 20th Prairial he ascended the tribune, his report in his hand. Never, say the survivors of that day, had his attitude displayed such a tension of will. Never had his voice, drawn from his very soul, an accent of more moral authority. He seemed to speak no longer in the tribune as one who raised or caressed the people, nor even as a legislator who promulgates perishable laws; but as a messenger who brings truth to men. The legislator who restores in the human heart an idea obscured or mutilated by ages, appeared at this moment to Robespierre equal to the philosophy which conceives it. The Convention, mute and collected, some through fear, others through respect, had in contemplation the gravity of the idea on which they were about to touch.

"Citizens," said Robespierre, after an exordium relative to the circumstances; "every doctrine which consoles and elevates the mind ought to be received; reject those which tend to degrade it and corrupt it. Reanimate — exalt — every generous sentiment and every great moral idea which some have desired to extinguish. Who has bestowed upon you the mission of announcing to the people that the Divinity exists not; oh, you who are impassioned for this barren doctrine, and who have no passion for your country? What advantage do you find in persuading man that a blind force presides over his destiny, and strikes, at hazard, vice and virtue; and that his soul is but a light breath, which vanishes at the portal of the tomb?

"Will the idea of his annihilation inspire him with purer or more elevated sentiments than that of his immortality? Will it inspire him with more respect for his fellow-creatures or for himself; more devotion for his country; more boldness to brave tyranny; or more contempt for death? You who regret a virtuous friend, do you love to think that his purest part has escaped death? You who weep over the coffin of a son or of a spouse, are you consoled by him who tells you that nothing more remains of them than the vile dust? Ye unfortunate, who expire beneath the blow of the assassin — your last sigh is an appeal to eternal justice. Innocence upon the scaffold makes the tyrant in his triumphal chariot turn pale. Would it have this ascendency if the tomb levelled the oppressor and the oppressed? The more gifted a man is with sensibility and genius, the more he attaches himself to ideas which aggrandise his being and which elevate his heart; and the doctrine of men of this caste becomes that of the universe.

"The idea of the Supreme Being and of the immortality of the soul is a continual appeal to justice; this idea is then social and republican. (Applause.) I do not know of any legislator who ever took upon himself to nationalise atheism. I know that the wisest, even amongst them, have allowed some fiction to mingle with truth, whether it were to strike the admiration of the ignorant, or to attach them more firmly to their institutions. Lycurgus and Solon had recourse to the authority of oracles; and Socrates himself, to accredit truth amongst his fellow-citizens, was obliged to persuade them that he was inspired by a familiar genius.

"You will not conclude, doubtless, that it should be neces-ary to deceive men to instruct them; but only that you are ortunate in living in an age and in a country whose refinenent leaves us no other labour to accomplish than to recall nen to nature and to truth.

"You will be very cautious not to sever the sacred bond which unites them to the author of their being.

"And what is this that the conspirators had substituted in place of what they destroyed? Nothing—if it be not chaos, emptiness, and violence. They despised the people too much to take the trouble of persuading them; in lieu of enlightening them, they desired only to irritate and deprave them.

"If the principles which I have developed so far are errors, I deceive myself at least with what all the world reveres. Let us take here the lessons of history. Remark, I beg of you, how men who have influenced the destiny of states, were determined towards one or the other of two systems in opposition to their personal character, and even to the nature of their political views. See with what profound art Cæsar, pleading in the Roman senate in favour of the accomplices of Catiline, wanders into a digression against the dogma of the immortality of the soul; so much did these ideas appear to him calculated to extinguish in the hearts of the judges the energy of virtue; so closely did the cause of vice appear to him allied to atheism. Cicero, on the contrary, invoked, against traitors, both the sword of the law and the thunder of the gods. Socrates, when dying, conversed with his friends on the immortality of the soul. Leonidas, at Thermopylæ, supping with his companions in arms at the moment of executing the most heroic design that human virtue ever conceived, invited them on the morrow to a banquet in a new existence. Socrates was far beyond Chaumette, and Leonidas surpassed Père Duchesne. (Applause.)

"A great man, a true hero, esteems himself too much to find consolation in the idea of his annihilation. A wretch, contemptible in his own eyes, horrible in those of others, feels that nature cannot bestow upon him a more delightful gift than annihilation. (Approbation.)

"A certain sect propagated with great zeal the opinion of materialism which prevailed amongst the greatest and most enlightened minds; to it is owing, in great part, that description of practical philosophy which, reducing egotism to a system, regards human society as a war of deception, success as the governing principle of the just and of the unjust, honesty as an affair of taste and convenience, and the world as a patrimony of adroit thieves. Amongst those who at the time of which I speak signalised themselves in the career of letters and of philosophy, one man, Rousseau, by the elevation of his mind and the grandeur of his character, showed himself worthy of the ministry of the preceptor of the human race. He openly attacked tyranny. He spoke with enthusiasm of the Divinity; his masculine and honest eloquence painted in glowing colours the charms of virtue; it defended those consolatory dogmas which reason bestows, as a support, to the human heart. The purity of his doctrine, drawn from nature, his profound hatred of vice, and his invincible contempt for the intriguing sophists who usurped the name of philosophers, drew upon him the hatred and persecution of his rivals and of his false friends. Ah, if he had been a witness of this Revolution, of which he was the precursor, and which has carried him to the Pantheon, who can doubt that his generous soul would have embraced with transport the cause of justice and equality? But what have his cowardly adversaries done for it? They have fought against the Revolution from the moment they feared that it would raise the people above them.

"The traitor Guadet denounced a citizen for having pronounced the name of Providence? We have heard, some time afterwards, Hébert accuse another, for having written against atheism! Were they not Vergniaud and Gensonné, who, in your presence, — even in your tribune, — harangued vehemently to banish from the preamble of the constitution the name of the Supreme Being, which you had placed therein? Danton, who smiled with pity at the words of virtue, glory, and posterity; Danton, whose system was to debase all that could elevate the mind; Danton, who was cold and dumb during the greatest dangers of liberty, spoke after them with much vehemence in favour of the same opinion. Fanatics, do not hope any thing from us! Recall men to the pure worship of the Supreme Being, that is to give a mortal blow to fanaticism. All fiction disappears before truth, and every folly falls before reason. Without constraint, without persecution, every sect ought to amalgamate itself with the universal religion of nature. (Applause.) Ambitious priests, do not expect then that we shall re-establish your empire! Such an enterprise would be even above our power. (Applause.) You have destroyed yourselves, and one no more returns to the life of morality than to physical existence. And, besides, what is there in common between the priests and God! How infinitely different is the God of nature from the God of the clergy. (Continued applause.) I know of nothing so much resembling atheism as the religions they have made: by means of disfiguring the Supreme Being they have annihilated as much as was appertaining to them; they have made of him sometimes a globe of fire, sometimes an ox, sometimes a tree, sometimes a man, and one while a king. The priests believed in a God of their own image,—they made him jealous, capricious, covetous, cruel, and implacable; they have treated him as the mayors of the palace treated the descendants of Clovis, in order to reign under his name, and to put themselves in his place; they have exiled him into heaven, as into a palace, and have only called him upon earth, to serve them in their demand for wealth, honours, pleasures, and power. (Loud applause.) The true priest of the Supreme Being is nature, his temple the universe, his adoration virtue; his fêtes the joy of a great people assembled under his eyes, to draw closer the delicious bond of universal fraternity, and to present to him the homage of pure and sensitive hearts.

"Let us leave the priests and return to the Divinity. (Applause.) Let us establish morality upon an eternal and sacred basis; let us inspire in man that religious respect for man,—that profound sentiment of his duties, which is the sole guarantee of social happiness.

"Misfortune attend him who seeks to extinguish this sublime enthusiasm, and to stifle by desolating doctrines this moral instinct of the people, which is the principle of all great actions! It belongs to you, representatives of the people, to cause the truths we are about to develop to triumph. Brave the wild clamour of presumptuous ignorance or of hypocritical perversity! How vast is then the depravity by which we are surrounded, if we have wanted courage to proclaim it? Would posterity believe that the vanquished factions had carried their audacity so far as to accuse us of moderation and of aristocracy, for having recalled the idea of the Divinity and morality? Would it credit that we had dared to say in this hall that we had thus repulsed human reason for many ages? Let us not be surprised if all the wretches combined against us appear desirous of giving us poison, but before we drink it, let us save the country. (Applause.)

The vessel which bears the fortune of the republic is not destined to be wrecked; she sails under your auspices, and the storm itself will be compelled to respect her. (Applause.)

"The enemies of the republic are all corrupt men. (Applause.) The patriot is in every sense an honest and magnanimous man. (Applause.) It is little to annihilate kings: it is necessary to make every nation respect the character of the French people. It is useless to bear to the end of the universe the renown of our arms, if every passion tears with impunity the bosom of our own country. Let us defy even the intoxication of success! Let us be terrible in reverses, modest in triumph (applause), and substantiate amongst us peace and happiness, by wisdom and morality. There is the true goal of our labours — there our most heroic and difficult task. We trust to arrive at this end by proposing to you the following decree: —

"Art. 1st. The French people recognise the existence of the Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul.

"Art. 2nd. They acknowledge that the worship worthy of the Supreme Being is the practice of the duties of man."

XXII. This return of the Revolution towards God was received with unanimous applause. Fêtes were decreed, to recall to man the idea of immortality and its consequences. The first and the most solemn was to be celebrated ten days after this profession of faith.

Deputations from the society of Jacobins felicitated the representation upon having caused justice and liberty to ascend to their source. Cambon, an honest and convinced Christian, requested that the temples should be avenged for the profanations of atheism. Couthon, in an enthusiastic harangue, defied the materialist philosophers to deny the Sovereign Arbiter of the universe, in the presence of his works, or to deny Providence in the regeneration of a debased people. The sight of this infirm and dying man, sustained within the tribune by the arms of two of his colleagues, and confessing, amidst the blood he had scattered, his judge in heaven, and the immortality of his soul, attested in Couthon the fanatic faith which concealed even from himself the atrocity of the means before the holiness of the end.

Whatever was the contrast between the sanguinary renown of Robespierre and his part as restorer of the divine principle, he went forth from this assembly a greater man than he had ever entered it. He had torn with a courageous hand the seal from the public conscience; that feeling responded to him throughout the nation, and throughout all Europe with secret applause. He had fortified himself, and had, if we may so say, endeavoured to consecrate himself by forming alliance with the loftiest idea of humanity. He who confessed God in the face of the people, would not hesitate, it was said, to disown crime and death. Every heart weary of hatred and contention secretly wished Robespierre all-powerful. This general desire in a government of opinion is, in effect, already omnipotence. He had seized the moral dictatorship on that day, upon the altar of the idea he had proclaimed. The force and the grandeur of the dogma which he had restored to the republic seemed to cast a halo round his name. On the morrow the remains of Jean Jacques Rousseau were conveyed to the Pantheon, in order that the master might be buried in the triumph of the disciple. Robespierre inspired this apotheosis. He bestowed upon the Revolution his true feelings, by this homage to the religious and almost Christian philosophy of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

## BOOK LVIII.

I. The hopes of a return to something like justice and moderation which were excited by these debates, were checked by two accidental causes, which prevented Robespierre from disclosing his projects, and moderating the revolutionary government, by raising himself above the committees. He did not at present dare to attempt two enterprises, either of which would prove amply sufficient to shake his popularity. He had just assailed atheism, and he now meditated the downfal of the reign of terror. But he still felt it necessary to grant the *terroristes* a short impunity until he had acquired the degree of popularity requisite to make all his colleagues bow before his pleasure. The committees were full of his secret enemies, and he knew that they would avail themselves of the least appearance of moderation, to crush him by the hand of La Montagne, beneath an accusation of clemency, which they would pervert into treason. Before Billaud-Varennes, Barrère, Collot d'Herbois, and Vadier, he wore a mask of inflexibility, which exceeded their own ; he felt that he could only quell them with their own weapons; and to attack them successfully, he must apparently surpass them in severity.

Hence a mutual contest of suspicion, proscription, and bloodshed; whilst the victims who perished beneath this struggle equally accused the barbarity of the one and the dissimulation of the other.

The committees suspected the moderate designs of Robespierre, and delighted in thwarting them by shielding themselves beneath his name; and the fear of his reproaches served as a pretext for all their crimes. This was the moment when this man must have felt the most remorse and humiliation, and have most bitterly repented having chosen so bloody a path through which to lead the people to their regeneration. The men whom he had first incited to this work, now swept him away in the current; and he served, whilst he detested them.

II. One of those adventurers who, born to misery, attribute to men the effects of chance, had just arrived at Paris, with the intention of killing Robespierre. His name was Ladmiral, and he was born amongst the mountains of Puy-de-Dôme. He had been, previous to the Revolution, in the service of the Minister Bertin, and afterwards had been placed by Dumouriez in one of those precarious posts created by conquest, in Brussels, whence the changes of the Revolution had driven him. Maddened by his fall, his misfortunes preyed upon his mind until he looked upon his own discontent as the opinion of the nation; and he sought to involve in his destruction one of those famous tyrants whose name cleaves to that of their assassin and elevates him to immortality.

Robespierre was the man who occupied Ladmiral's thoughts, —for the Terror bore the name of Robespierre, and he assumed the responsibility of the age.

It so happened that Ladmiral lodged in the same house as Collot d'Herbois. Armed with pistols and a dagger, he watched for Robespierre, and even awaited him for whole days in the passages of the Committee of Public Safety, but chance always deprived him of his intended victim. At length, wearied of seeking him, he deemed that fate pointed out another, and he waylaid Collot d'Herbois on the stairs of his house one night, when the proscriber of Lyons returned from the Jacobins, and snapped two pistols at him ; the first flashed in the pan, and the second hung fire ; the ball passed close by Collot's head and lodged itself in the wall ; whilst Collot, grappling with his assassin, rolled down the stairs. The report of the pistol, and the noise of the struggle, soon gave the alarm. Ladmiral barricaded himself in his room, and threatened to fire on the first man who dared lay hands on him. A locksmith named Geffroy ventured to enter, and Ladmiral instantly discharged a pistol at him, which wounded him severely ; he was, however, after a desperate struggle, seized, and brought before Fouquier-Tinville, and replied, when questioned, that he sought to deliver his country.

III. At the same moment a young girl of seventeen went to Robespierre's house and asked to see him ; her youth and innocent appearance lulled all suspicion, and she was shown into the anteroom, where she remained, until at length her pertinacity excited attention, and she was desired to withdraw. She however refused, saying, that "a public man should at all times be accessible to those who wished to see him." The guard was then called in, and she was searched. In her basket were some clothes, and two small knives, quite incapable of being used by her as instruments of assassination. She was however brought before the tribunal of the Rue des Piques, and examined. "Why did you visit Robespierre?" she was asked. "I wished," she replied, "to see what a tyrant was like." This reply was tortured into a confession of a plot, and her arrest was supposed to be connected with Ladmiral's attempt. It was reported she was an agent of the English government, and that at a *bal masqué* at London, a woman dressed as Charlotte Corday, had brandished a poignard over her head, exclaiming, "I seek Robespierre." Others said the Committee of Public Safety had guillotined her lover, and that this was an attempt at revenge. Both were deceived ; it was but the whim of a child, who sought to learn if the aspect of a tyrant would inspire her with hate or love. Her name was Cécile Renault, and her father was a paper-maker in the Cité. "Why," she was asked, "did you provide yourself with these clothes?" "Because I expected to be sent to prison." "Why had you these two knives; did you intend to stab Robespierre?" "No; I never wished to hurt any one in my life." "Why did you wish to see Robespierre?" "To satisfy myself if he was like the man I had pictured to myself." "Why are you a royalist?" "Because I prefer one king to sixty tyrants." She was however, with Ladmiral, placed in strict confinement.

IV. The news of these two attempts, at the Convention and the Jacobins, caused an explosion of fury against the royalists, admiration for the deputies, and idolatry for Robespierre. Collot d'Herbois gained importance in proportion to the dangers he had undergone; for the poignard seemed to have marked the importance of these two leaders by singling them out. A poignard had deified Marat; the pistol of Ladmiral rendered Collot d'Herbois illustrious; and the knife of Cécile Renault consecrated Robespierre.

The Convention, on learning the first attempt, received Collot as the degraded senate of Rome received the tyrants of the empire when protected by the clemency of the gods. The sections were unanimous in their thanks to the genius of liberty, and it was proposed to decree a guard to the members of the Committee of Public Safety. On the 6th, the Jacobins assembled, and Couthon, borne on the shoulders of the people, thanked Heaven for the preservation of a life he devoted to his country. "The tyrants," cried he, "wish to rid themselves of us by assassination, but they know not that when a patriot expires, those who survive him swear over his corpse to avenge the crime, and perpetuate liberty."

Legendre sought to expiate his imprudence by the arrest of Danton, and again proposed to decree a guard to the members of the committee; but Couthon saw the snare, and replied that the members of the committee wished for no other guard than that of Providence, who watched over them, and that when necessary, republicans knew how to die."

Robespierre was the last to mount the tribunal, and in vain endeavoured to obtain a hearing amidst the thunder of applause that welcomed him. When however, he at last could speak: —

"I am," said he, "one of those whom these attempts have threatened the last. But I fully expected that the defenders of liberty would be a mark for the daggers of tyranny; and I have before told you that if we unmask factions and defeat our foes, we should be assassinated. What I predicted has come to pass; the soldiers of the tyrants have fallen traitors, have expiated their crimes on the scaffold, and poignards are sharpened against us. I felt it more facile to assassinate us than to vanquish our principles, and defeat our armies. I felt that the more the life of the defenders of the people is uncertain, so much the more they should hasten to perform actions useful to freedom. The crimes of tyrants, and the assassin's steel, have but rendered us more free, and more terrible to the foes of the people."

At these words a general shout of admiration burst from the people, and Robespierre threw himself into the arms of the Jacobins. He, however, soon remounted the tribune, and disdainfully opposed the motion of Legendre. The more Robespierre humbled himself, the more he triumphed; for the people pay in adoration all that their idol refuses to receive in majesty.

V. At the sitting of the Convention the next day, 17th June, Barrère exaggerated the dangers in two emphatic reports. He attributed to foreign governments, and especially to Mr. Pitt, the facts of having excited the madness of Ladmiral, and the childishness of Cécile Renault. The Convention pretended to believe these plots, and that it would protect the whole by shielding Robespierre beneath its ægis and its devotion. Barrère concluded by proposing an atrocious decree, which ordered the massacre of all the English or Hanoverian prisoners hereafter taken by the armies of the republic.

Robespierre, called upon by the looks and gestures of all around him, followed Barrère. "It will be," he said to his colleagues, "a fine theme for posterity; it is already a spectacle worthy of heaven and earth, to see the assembly of the representatives of the French people placed in an inextinguishable volcano of conspiracies, with one hand bring to the feet of the eternal author of things the homage of a great people, with the other to dart thunder on the tyrants who have conspired against him, to found the first democracy in the world, and to recall amongst mortals exiled liberty, justice, and virtue." At this exordium, which raised in the Convention a personal question to elevate it to the height of a general question, loud and lengthened applause interrupted Robespierre. They no longer saw in him a man, but the personification of the country. "They shall perish," he continued, in a voice of inspiration; "they shall perish,—tyrants armed against the French people! They shall perish,—factions who lean on powers to destroy our liberty! You shall not make peace, but you shall bestow it on the world—you shall refuse it to crime! Doubtless they are not so mad as to believe that the death of certain representatives can assure their triumph. If they had believed that in sending us to the tomb, the genius of Brissot, Hébert, Danton would spring from it triumphant to deliver us a fourth time to discord, they would deceive themselves."

At this insult to the memory of Danton, there was a movement of discontent, and some stir on La Montagne. Robespierre perceived it, and checked himself: "When we shall have fallen beneath their blows," he continued, with a reckless burst, which seemed to raise him above himself, "you will desire to complete your sublime enterprise, or partake our fate! Yes," he continued, suspending the applause begun by the energy of his voice and attitude; "yes, there is not one of you who would not come and swear upon our bleeding bodies to exterminate the last enemies of the people!" All the representatives rose with an unanimous movement, and assumed the form of taking the oath.

"They hoped," he continued, "to starve the French people! The French people still live; and nature, faithful to liberty, promises them abundance. What, then, remains to them? Assassination! They believed they should exterminate us by placing us in opposition, and by subsidising us. This plan failed. What remained to them? Assassination! They thought to overwhelm us beneath the efforts of their armed league, and above all by treason! Traitors tremble, or perish; their cannon fall into our power, their satellites flee before us. What remains to them? Assassination!

They have sought to dissolve the Convention by corruption. The Convention has punished their accomplices, and there remains to them only assassination! They have endeavoured to defame the republic, and quench amongst us the generous sentiments of which love of country and liberty are formed, banishing from the republic good sense, virtue, and divinity. We have proclaimed the divinity and immortality of the soul,—we have commanded virtue in the name of the republic,—but assassination is still left to them. Let us then rejoice and return thanks to heaven, since we have been judged worthy of the poignards of tyranny!" The hall shook with the acclamations which this burst of ancient magnanimity created.

"These are then glorious dangers for us to run," he added. "The city offers as many as the field of battle; we have nothing to envy our brave brothers in arms. We pay in a thousand ways our debt to our country! O kings! it is not we who complain of the nature of the war you make. When the powers of the earth unite to kill one feeble individual, unquestionably he should not cling to existence. Thus we have not calculated on a long life. It is not to live that we declare war against all tyrants, and all vices. What man that was ever born could defend humanity with impunity? Surrounded by their assassins," he continued in a more solemn voice; "I am already placed in the new order of things, to go whithersoever they would send me! I no longer cling to uncertain life, but from a love of country or thirst for justice, and am more than ever weaned from all personal considerations: I feel myself more disposed to attack energetically all the wretches who conspire against the human race! The more they seek to terminate my career here, the more would I hasten to fill it up with acts of usefulness to my fellow creatures. I will leave them at least a testament, whose perusal shall make all tyrants and their accomplices tremble!"

At this apostrophe, which seemed to place the tribune beyond the grave, the Convention, for a long time silent, burst into prolonged acclamation. Robespierre then, giving up his own person, gave as if from another world his last counsels to the republic. "What constitutes the republic," he said, "is neither victory, nor fortune, nor conquest, nor fleeting enthusiasm,—it is the wisdom of laws, and especially public virtue. Laws are to be made, manners to be regenerated. Would you know who are the ambitious?" he continued in an allusion not direct but ill concealed against his enemies in the committee; "examine who they may be who protect knaves and corrupt public morals. To make war against crime is the road to the tomb and immortality! To favour crime is the way to the throne and the scaffold. (Applause.) Some perverse-minded persons have contrived to cast the republic, and the reason of the people, into chaos. It is now our business to reconstruct the harmony of the moral and the political world."

At this definition of the Revolution all the benches responded by an unanimous assent.

"If France were governed during some months by a wavering or corrupt legislation, liberty would be destroyed."

This clear insinuation of the necessity of a supreme magistracy to regulate the Convention, drew down on Robespierre the angry glances of his enemies. — He braved them.

"In saying these things," he said, with proud disregard of self, "I perhaps sharpen daggers against myself; and that is why I say them. I have lived long enough! I have seen the French people spring up from the bosom of corruption and servitude to the height of glory and republican virtue. I have seen its chains broken, and guilty thrones which weigh heavily on earth, overturned or shaken beneath its triumphant hands! I have seen more; I have seen an assembly invested with the omnipotence of the French nation, advance with a rapid and firm step towards public happiness, give an example of all courage and all virtues. — Complete, citizens, complete your sublime destinies! You have placed us in the van to sustain the first effort of the enemies of humanity. We deserve this honour, and we will trace out for you with our blood the road to immortality."

VI. Such words had perhaps never before been heard in a deliberative assembly. It was politics raised to the height of the religious type of the philosopher, heroism in the eloquence, death in the apostleship. The Convention ordered this harangue to be printed in all languages. It prepared minds for the solemnity of the morrow. Ridicule, which withers all in France, was obliged to feign enthusiasm before doctrines which dared brave death and bear witness of God!

Robespierre awaited this day with the impatience of a man who is preparing to develop a great design, and fears lest death should snatch it from him before its accomplishment. Of all the missions which he believed to be within him, the highest, the most holy in his eyes, was the regeneration of the religious sentiment in the people. To unite heaven and earth by this bond of a faith and rational worship, which the republic had broken, was for him the accomplishment of the Revolution. From the day when reason and liberty were united to God in the conscience, he believed them as immortal as God himself. He was ready to die after that day. The internal joy of his work accomplished, appeared, after his report to the Convention, in his features. His private friends were surprised at his unusual calmness, as he wandered with them in the garden of Mousseaux. His heart was bounding with joy, and he talked incessantly of the 8th of June. He aspired — he confessed —to close the era of punishments by the era of fraternity and clemency. He went, accompanied by Villate and the painter David, to examine the preparations. He was anxious that this ceremony should impress the soul of the people through the eyes, and that it should represent images majestic and gentle as that supreme power which is only manifested by its benefits. "Why," said he to Souberbielle, on the previous evening, "must there be one scaffold left on the surface of France? Life alone ought to-morrow to appear before the source of all life."

He required that all punishments should be suspended on the day of the ceremony.

VII. The Convention had (as an exception) nominated Robespierre president. So that the author of the decree might be also principal actor therein. At the break of day he was at the Tuileries awaiting the coming of his colleagues, anxious to give the final instructions as to the religious ceremony. He was for the first time in his life clothed as a representative in mission. A coat of paler blue than the coat of the members of the Convention; white waistcoat, yellow leather breeches, top boots, and a round hat with a quantity of tricoloured ribands in it, attracted towards him universal attention. He held in his hand an enormous bouquet of flowers and wheat-ears, the first fruits of the year. He had in his haste forgotten the claims of humanity. The Convention had already met in the chamber, and the procession was ready to set out, and he had not taken any food. Villate, who lived in the Tuileries, offered him breakfast, which he accepted.

The sky was of an eastern purity. The sun shone on the trees of the Tuileries, and the domes and walls of the buildings of Paris, with as much clearness and brilliancy as on the temples of Attica.

On entering Villate's apartment Robespierre threw his hat and bouquet in an arm-chair, and then leaned on the window-sill. He appeared delighted at the spectacle of the numerous crowd which was pressing into the walks and alleys of the garden, in order to be present at these mysteries, the type of the unknown. Women, dressed in their gayest clothes, were holding their children by the hand — every countenance was radiant. "See," said Robespierre, "the most touching part of humanity. The universe is here assembled by its witnesses. How eloquent and majestic is nature! Such a fête ought to make tyrants and ingrates tremble!"

He ate but little; and these were the only words he uttered. After his meal, at the moment when he was rising to place himself at the head of the procession, which was already moving, a young woman, residing in Villate's family, entered with a child in her arms. The name of Robespierre at first frightened the stranger; but he soon reassured her, and began playing with the child; and the mother, giving way to mirth, obtained the bouquet of the president of the Convention. It was after twelve o'clock, and Robespierre, unwittingly or purposely, forgot that he was delaying at Villate's. His colleagues had been long assembled, and were murmuring at his delay; whilst he seemed to enjoy their waiting — a mark of inferiority. At length he appeared.

VIII. An immense amphitheatre, like those of the ancient circus, was arranged at the back of the Tuileries. This circus descended step by step to the ground. The Convention entered on a level with the windows of the pavilion of the centre, like the Cæsars into their Coliseums. In the centre of this amphitheatre a tribune, higher than the steps, and much resembling a throne, was reserved for Robespierre. In the front of his seat a colossal group of emblematical figures, the sole poesy of this imitative period, represented atheism, egotism, nothingness, crimes and vice. These emblems, framed by David out of combustible materials, were intended to be set on fire, as victims of the sacrifice. The idea of a God was to reduce them to ashes. All the deputies, dressed alike, in blue coats with red facings, and holding in their hands a symbolic bouquet, slowly seated themselves on the steps. Robespierre appeared. His being alone; his height, his plume, and his extremely large bouquet, gave him the air of a master. The people whom his name controlled, as his throne controlled the Convention, believed they were about to proclaim his dictatorship. Imperial acclamations hailed him only, and overshadowed the brows of his colleagues. The multitude was eager to hear him. Some expected an amnesty, others the organisation of a strong and mild rule. The Revolutionary Tribunal suspended, the scaffold, demolished for a day, allowed imagination to revel in consolatory perspectives. Never did a people appear better disposed to receive a Saviour and human laws.

IX. "Frenchmen, republicans!" said Robespierre, in a voice which he made to fill the space of his vast auditory; "at length has arrived the day for ever fortunate, which the French people have consecrated to the Supreme Being! Never did the world which he has created offer to its author a spectacle more worthy of his regard. He has seen reigning over the earth tyranny, crime, imposture. He sees at this moment an entire nation contending against all the oppressors of the human race, suspending the course of their heroic labours, to raise their thoughts and views towards the Great Being who gave them the wisdom to undertake and the force to execute them!

"He did not create kings to devour the human species; he did not create priests to harness us like vile animals to the car of kings, and give to the world the example of baseness, pride, perfidy, avarice, debauchery, and falsehood; but he created the universe to make known his power; he created men to aid and love each other, and to attain happiness by the path of virtue.

"It is He who places in the bosom of the triumphant oppressor remorse, and in the heart of the oppressed innocent calmness and disdain; it is He who makes the just man hate the wicked, and the wicked man respect the just; it is He who adorns with modesty the brow of beauty, in order to embellish it the more; it is He who makes mothers' hearts to throb with tenderness and joy; it is He who bathes with delicious tears the eyes of the child pressed to its mother's bosom; it is He who silences the most energetic and most tender passions before the sublime love of country; it is He who has covered nature with charms, riches, and majesty: all that is good is his work,—evil belongs to depraved man, who oppresses or allows his fellow-creatures to be oppressed.

"The Author of Nature hath bound all mortals together by a vast chain of love and happiness: perish the tyrants who have dared to break it!

"Being of Beings! we have not to address to thee unjust prayers: thou knowest the creatures sent forth from thy hands; their wants do not escape thine eyes, no more than do their most secret thoughts. The hatred of hypocrisy and tyranny burns in our hearts, with the love of justice and our country. Our blood flows for the cause of humanity! This is our prayer — our sacrifice — this the worship we offer unto thee!"

The people applauded rather the act than the language. Strains of music then filled the air; and thousands of voices sung the hymn of Chénier:—

"Dieu puissant, d'un peuple intrépide,"
&c. &c. &c.

After the final chorus of—

"Avant de déposer nos glaives triomphants,
Jurons d'anéantir le crime et les tyrans,*

Robespierre, descending from the amphitheatre, set fire to the group of atheism. The fire and smoke spread in the air at the acclamations of the multitude. The members of the Convention following their chief at a long space, advanced in two columns through the multitude, towards the Champ-de-Mars. Between the two columns of the Convention were rustic cars, ploughs drawn by oxen, and other symbols of agriculture, trades, and arts. A row of young girls, clothed in white, attached to each other by ties of tri-coloured ribands, formed the only guard of the Convention. Robespierre went first and alone, frequently turning round in order to measure the interval left between himself and his colleagues, as if to accustom the people to separate him from them by respect, as he separated himself from them by distance. All eyes were turned on him. He bore on his brow the pride, and on his lips the smile, of omnipotence.

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* We swear before we sheathe the conquering blade,
That crimes and tyrants shall be prostrate laid.

X. A symbolic eminence was raised in the centre of the Champ-de-Mars, in the place of the ancient altar of the country. The approach to it was narrow and confined. Robespierre, Couthon (carried in an arm-chair), Saint-Just, and Lebas were on the summit: the rest of the Convention were spread about at the sides of this mountain, and appeared humiliated at being ruled over in presence of the multitude by this group of triumvirs. Robespierre proclaimed from his elevation, amidst salvos of artillery, the profession of faith of the French people. The people were intoxicated,—the Convention sullen. The majestic position of Robespierre, the exclusive enthusiasm of the people for their representative; the subaltern position which the president had assigned to his colleagues on the mountain; the dictatorial distance which he kept between them and himself in the march; the inducing of the multitude towards religious ideas, whence this excitable people might so easily slide into ancient superstitions; the name of Robespierre linked with the proclaiming of the Supreme Being, and, as it were, consecrated in the midst of the nation by the divinity of the dogma which he restored to the republic; in fact, the very idea of this restoration of immortality which was so repugnant to those lovers of annihilation; above all, the crushing ascendency of a man who planted his popularity in the fundamental instinct of the human species, and which gained to itself the conscience of the nation, like a high priest, perhaps to seize on the nation itself the next day, like Cæsar: all these thoughts, envyings, fears, ambitions, muttered at first sullenly from the mouth to the ear, ended by the utterance of one loud murmur and open dissatisfaction. Threatening looks, equivocal gestures, half words, and remarks admitting of a two-fold construction, struck the eyes and ears of Robespierre during his return from the Champ-de-Mars to the Tuileries. "It is but a step from the capitol to the Tarpeian Rock," cried one voice. "There are Brutuses yet," said another. "Look at that man!" exclaimed a third: "he believes in God already, and desires to accustom the republic to adore some one that he himself may be adored by and by." "He invented God because he is the supreme tyrant," added a fourth. "He desires to be his high priest — he may be his victim."

These comments, "not loud but deep,"—these sullen murmurs, followed Robespierre to the Convention. Fouché, Tallien, Barrère, Collot-d'Herbois, Lecomte, Léonard Bourdon, Billaud-Varennes, Vadier, and Amar, profited by this growing opposition to sharpen resentment and urge it to revolt. They groaned over the approaching tyranny of a man who so ill disguised his insolence towards the Convention; flattered the most inveterate prejudices of the people; put the Revolution on its knees, and placed himself between God and the nation, in order the better to place himself between the people and the Convention. Robespierre lost his *prestige* and popularity on the very altar on which he had restored the Supreme Being. This day magnified him with the people, and ruined him with the Convention. He returned pensive to his habitation, where he was all day besieged by anonymous congratulations. The restorer of justice was perceived in the restorer of truth. Protracted acclamations beneath his windows thanked him for having restored a soul to the people and a God to the republic. Several notes contained only the word "*Osez!*" (Dare!)

It was in truth the moment to dare. If on the return from the ceremony of the morning he had elicited by some direct insinuations the bursting forth of the people's love, who desired nothing more earnestly; if the deputations of certain sections leading after them the wavering crowd had come to demand of the Convention the installation of a concentrated and regulating power in the person of their favourite, the dictatorship or presidency would have been voted to Robespierre by acclamation; and if he had had the daring to proclaim the revolutionary power at an end, the popular power beginning, and the abolition of punishment, he would have reigned next day, have cast on his enemies all the blood shed, have usurped the popularity of clemency, and saved the republic, which his indecision was about to destroy. He did not do this, but allowed himself to be soothed by those vague breezes of public favour and ascendency, and he grasped nothing but empty space.

XI. Saint-Just wished to go still further, but perceiving that he could not prevail on Robespierre to accept the supreme power at the hands of the people, he resolved to cause it to be decreed him by the Committee of Public Safety. Saint-Just bethought him of Cæsar, when he caused the crown to be offered him,—ready to refuse it if the people murmured, to accept it if the people applauded. Saint-Just, in the absence of Robespierre, held a secret meeting, at which he drew a gloomy picture of the state of the republic. "The evil is at its height," said the young representative: "we are torn to pieces by anarchy, and the laws with which we inundate France are but arms which we place in the hands of the enemies of the republic. Every representative of the people now at the armies, or in the departments, is a king in his provinces: they reign, and we are but vain images of unity. Blood overwhelms us, wealth is hidden, the frontiers are exposed, war is carried on without unison, and our very victories are but glorious effects of hazards, which, whilst they shed additional lustre on our arms, do not save us. At home we cut each others' throats, and each faction, whilst it destroys itself, destroys the country. Can we suffer the republic to pass thus from hand to hand until it becomes at last an object of horror to the people and contempt to kings. Will these convulsions end in utter prostration or renewed vigour? Shall we live or die? The republic will live or die with us. There is but one hope for us all, in the concentration of a power divided and disputed by as many hands as there are factions amongst us. It is the unity of the government personified in one man.

"But you will exclaim, who is the man so far above the ordinary weaknesses and suspicion of mankind that the republic should incorporate itself in him? I confess the mission is a terrible one, — the danger great, if we should err in our choice. This man must possess the genius of the epoch in his mind, the virtues of the republic in his manners, the inflexibility of his country in his heart, the purity of its principles in his life, the incorruptibility of its dogmata in his soul; he must have been born to public life the same day as the Revolution, and have followed its footsteps, increasing with her in patriotism and virtue. He must be thoroughly acquainted with the men and events of the last five years; and he must have won such popularity, that the voice of the people shall assign to him the dictatorship.

"At this portrait of such a man, which of you does not recognise Robespierre? He alone unites the genius, the virtues, and the acquirements, which can obtain the perfect confidence of the Convention and the people. Let us behold our safety in him, and submit to the visible necessity our envy, our ambition, and our repugnances. It is not I who have named Robespierre, but his virtue. It will not be we who have made him a dictator, but the providence of the republic."

At the word dictator every visage grew dark. No one dared dispute the genius and the virtue of Robespierre; but all treated the idea of Saint-Just as one of those fevered dreams of patriotism which disturb the clearest brain, and cause men to seek safety in suicide. "Robespierre is great and wise," said they; "but the republic is greater and wiser than a man! The dictatorship would be the throne of discouragement: no man shall ever sit on it so long as the republicans exist." Saint-Just in vain persisted; and Lebas as vainly strove to explain the meaning of his colleague; and the members quitted the Assembly irritated, alarmed, but forewarned. The imprudence of Saint-Just was imputed to Robespierre as a crime. "These men do not ask for the supreme power," said Billaud to his friends: "they assume it. Let them seize on it if they dare." From this time the committees nourished a hatred against Robespierre, which often displayed itself in the meetings.

XII. On the morrow, however, of the festival of the Supreme Being, the Convention passed, at the motion of Robespierre and his adherents, a number of decrees imbued with the true spirit of the Revolution. The Convention, tranquillised for a moment, seemed to wish to display, by beneficent laws, the inspiration of those philosophical doctrines it had invoked upon the republic. It rendered the state what it should be, — the visible Providence of the people. It borrowed from the superfluity of the wealthy the sums needful to support, aid, and instruct; realised in practice the theoretical paternity it had always inculcated. A constitution at once military and democratic was formed, from which the army would recruit its officers. It declared that mendicity was an accusation against the egotism of wealth and the improvidence of the state, whilst every encouragement was given to industry and labour. Infancy was protected, youth educated, old age provided for. The infirm were supported at the national expense, and misery abolished. The national property was distributed in lots within the reach of the smallest capitalist, to encourage agriculture. The population was classed. The unfortunate declared sacred, and asylums provided for women about to become mothers. Pecuniary aid was granted those who brought up their children at home; and also to those the produce of whose toil was inadequate to maintain their large family. Taxes were regulated; and the superfluity of the wealthy was employed in supporting the pensioners of the state. Work was found for all who were destitute of employment; whilst, instead of hospitals, doctors and medicines were furnished the sick at their own homes, to spare the pride of families and domestic affection. The Convention adopted the orphans; and decreed honours and rewards to the wives, widows, and relations of those who had fallen in defence of the nation. It favoured the country at the expense of the cities; abodes of luxury, vice, and indolence it sought to discountenance; encouraged arts and sciences; converted beneficence into a duty, and charity into an institution.

The people, on perusing these decrees, began to hope that they had at last obtained with their blood the principle of democracy; and that philosophy, so long eclipsed, would secure the victory, and transform itself into a government.

The scaffold alone still formed the obstacle to these hopes.

XIII. Robespierre always secretly entertained hopes of abolishing it; but he could only abolish the terror, he said, by inspiring still greater terror.

Warned by the murmurs that had broken forth at the festival of the Supreme Being, as well as by Saint-Just and Lebas, of the hatred of the committees, he resolved to astonish his rivals by his daring, and outstrip them by his promptitude. On the 22d Prairial, two days after the ceremony of the Supreme Being, he, in concert with Couthon, suddenly proposed to the Convention a decree for the re-organisation of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

This Draconian project had been only partly communicated to the committees, and was but the code of arbitrary power, sanctioned by death, and executed by the guillotine.

The category of the enemies of the people included all citizens, members of the Convention or not, who were within the reach of suspicion. It was the omnipotence of judgments and penalties. The dictatorship, not of a man, but of the scaffold.

Ruamps exclaimed: "If this decree were to pass without an adjournment I should blow out my brains." Barrère, convinced by the audacity of this project of the strength of Robespierre, supported it. Bourdon de l'Oise ventured to combat it, whilst Robespierre insisted it should be at once debated. "Since we are freed from factions," said he, pointing to the vacant place of Danton, "we discuss and vote at once. These demands for adjournment are affectation at a time like this."

The decree was passed; but night convinced the Convention they had voted their death-warrant. Meetings were held by the principal enemies of Robespierre, generally at the house of Courtois, a *modéré* deputy, who hated Robespierre for his share in the downfal of Danton, his countryman and friend.

The next day, Bourdon de l'Oise demanded that the Convention should reserve to itself the right of impeaching its members, and Merlin seconded the motion. A modification of such a nature as to disarm Robespierre and the committees was then adopted.

At the following sitting Delbrel and Mallarmé demanded other modifications, that weakened the decree still more. Couthon boldly defended it, flattered the Convention, reassured the committee, and rebuked Bourdon. "What could Pitt or Coburg have said more?" exclaimed he. Bourdon proudly excused himself. "Let these members of the committee learn," replied he, "that if they are patriots we are no less so. I esteem Couthon,—I esteem the committee;

but I also esteem that unshakeable Montagne that has saved liberty."

Robespierre, irritated at this remark, then rose. "The speech you have just heard," said he, "proves the necessity of a clearer explanation. "Bourdon seeks to separate the Committee from the Montagne. The Convention, the Committee, and the Montagne are the same. (Loud applause.) Citizens! when the leaders of a sacrilegious faction,—Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Guadet, and other scoundrels, whose name the French nation will never pronounce save with horror,— had placed themselves at the head of a portion of this august Assembly, that was, doubtless, the moment when the purer party of the Convention should have rallied together to combat them. Then the name of the Montagne, which served them as an asylum amidst this tempest, became sacred, because it designated that portion of the representatives of the people who struggled against falsehood; but from the moment these men fell beneath the sword of the law, and that probity, justice, and decorum have become the order of the day, there can be but two parties in the Convention, — the good and the bad. If I have the right of using this language to the Convention in general, I have also the right of addressing it to that celebrated Montagne to which I am no stranger; and I think that this homage from my heart is worth that which issues from the mouth of another.

"Yes, Montagnards, you will ever be the bulwark of public liberty; but you have nothing in common with *intrigants* and the perverse. The Montagne is but the height of patriotism. A Montagnard is but a pure, reasonable, sublime patriot; and it would be an insult to the Convention to permit a few *intrigants*, more contemptible than the rest, because they are more hypocritical, to endeavour to influence a portion of the Montagne, and to render themselves the leaders of a party."

Bourdon de l'Oise, interrupting the orator, exclaimed, "Never was it my intention to render myself the leader of a party."

"It would be the excess of infamy," continued Robespierre more vehemently, "that some of our colleagues, misled by calumny as to our intention, and aim —— "

Bourdon de l'Oise again interrupted him.

"I demand that what is alleged shall be proved. It has just been asserted, in the clearest terms, that I was a scoundrel."

"I demand, in the name of the country," replied Robespierre, "that I be permitted to speak. I did not name Bourdon. Woe to him who names himself. But if he chooses to recognise himself in the general portrait, which duty has forced me to trace, it is not in my power to prevent it. Yes," continued he, in a more threatening tone, "the Montagne is pure, sublime; but the *intrigants* are not of the Montagne."

Several voices exclaimed, "Name them, name them!"

"I will name them," replied Robespierre; "when it is necessary;" and he continued to trace the intrigues that convulsed the Convention. "Come to our assistance," said he, in conclusion. "Do not suffer us to be distinguished from yourselves, since we are but a portion of yourselves; since, without you, we are nought. Give us strength to bear the immense, and almost superhuman, burden you have imposed on us. Let us be ever united, in spite of our common foes."

The applause of the majority of the Convention prevented him from proceeding; and it was demanded that the decree should be at once voted. Robespierre contradicted Tallien concerning a charge of *espionage*, on the part of the committees, which the latter had just denounced to the Convention.

"This is utterly untrue," said Robespierre; "but it is true that Tallien is one of those who constantly speak of the guillotine with alarm, as though it were a means of disquieting and humbling the Convention."

"The impudence of Tallien is excessive," added Billaud-Varennes, "and he lies with unparalleled audacity; but, citizens, we shall remain united, the conspirators will perish, and the country be saved."

The committee and Robespierre, united for the moment by the common peril, joined in wresting from the Convention the weapon destined to decimate it; and the triumph of Robespierre was complete. The same evening Tallien, who trembled for his life, wrote a confidential letter to

Robespierre, in which he humbled himself before him, and which was found amongst the latter's papers after his death.

"Robespierre," said Tallien, "the terrible and unjust words you have uttered yet rankle in my wounded heart; and I come, with all the frankness of an honest man, to give you some explanations! You have been for a long time surrounded by *intrigants*, who love to behold divisions amongst the patriots, and who fill you with prejudices against several of your colleagues, and more especially against me. Let my conduct be remembered at a time when I had much revenge to wreak. I appeal to you! Well, Robespierre, I have changed neither my principles nor my conduct; a friend to liberty, truth, and justice, I have not for an instant deviated. As for the expressions ascribed to me, I deny them; I know that to your eyes, and those of the committees, I am represented as a man of immoral conduct: let any one beset my house, and they will find me with my aged and venerable mother in the dwelling we occupied previous to the Revolution. All luxury is banished thence; and, with the exception of a few books, my property has not been augmented one sou. I have, doubtless, committed some errors; but they were involuntary, and the inevitable consequence of human frailty. Such is my profession of faith; and never will I abjure it, for such would be the conduct of a bad citizen, who sought to retard the progress of the Revolution. Such, Robespierre, are my sentiments. Living alone and isolated, I have but few friends, but I shall be ever the friend of the real defenders of the people."

Robespierre made no reply, for he did not esteem Tallien sufficiently to believe that his pen could ever be converted into a poignard. In a revolution, servile men are never sufficiently mistrusted; they alone are dangerous.

XIV. Some days after, Robespierre attacked a man more pliable and more redoubtable than Tallien — Fouché, and caused him to be expelled from the society for having preached atheism at Nevers. "Does this man fear to appear before you?" said he, to the Jacobins, "Does he fear the eyes and ears of the people? Does he fear, lest his sinister features should too openly display crime, and that the eyes of six thousand men should read his soul in his looks, and read his thoughts written there in spite of nature?"

The hatred felt against him now broke out more openly in the committees. Robespierre, Couthon, and Saint-Just imperiously demanded that they should make use of the decree they had obtained, to send before the revolutionary tribunals the men who agitated the Convention. These men, Fouché, Tallien, Bourdon de l'Oise, Fréron, Thuriot, Robert, Lecointre, Barras, Legendre, Cambon, Léonard Bourdon, Duval, Audouin, Carrier, and Joseph Lebon. The committees hesitated, and Couthon appealed to the Jacobins.

"The shades of Danton, Hébert, and Chaumette are yet amongst us," said he, at the sitting of the 26th, "and seek to perpetuate the evil done us by these conspirators. The republic has placed all her confidence in the Convention, who merits it, although there still exists amongst its members some few disaffected; but the time is come in which these scoundrels are to be unmasked and punished. Happily," continued he, "their number is but small — four or six. Let the wicked fall — let them perish!"

Violent altercations frequently took place between Robespierre and his colleagues. Billaud-Varennes made no secret of his suspicions of the use which the triumvirs proposed to make of the secret of the Prairial. "You then seek to guillotine all the Convention?" said he, one day, to Robespierre. Carnot and Collot d'Herbois also reproached Robespierre with the oppression he exercised over the government. Carnot was offended with Saint-Just, who affected to disarrange his military combinations with the thoughtlessness of a young man; whilst Vadier, the president of the Committee of Public Safety, shared the animosity of his colleagues.

On the evening of the day when Elie Lacoste was to make his report on the conspiracy of Ladmiral and Cécile Renault, Vadier came to the Committee. "To-morrow," he said to Robespierre, "I shall make my report in an affair which relates to this, and shall propose that the Sainte-Amaranthe family be included in the accusation." "You will do no such thing," replied Robespierre, imperiously. "I shall do it," was Vadier's rejoinder. "I have all the documents in my hand; they prove the conspiracy, and I will unveil the whole mystery." "Proofs or not, if you venture, I will attack you," retorted Robespierre. "You are the tyrant of the Committee of Public Safety," said Vadier. "Ah! I am the tyrant of the Committee of Public Safety!" replied Robespierre, with difficulty restraining tears of rage; "Well then, I free you of my tyranny. I withdraw; save my country without me, if you can. I am resolved I will not renew the character of Cromwell." And he withdrew as he spoke, and never again entered the Committee of Public Safety.

Some regarded this absence and voluntary abdication as weakness, others as a skilful policy. The courage which Robespierre had hitherto shown in presence of his enemies, and which he subsequently exhibited in the presence of death, would not at all allow us to suppose that it was weakness that actuated him. From the moment when Robespierre could no longer restrain the committees by the ascendency of his will and his popularity, it seemed wiser to him to separate himself ostensibly from his colleagues. He thus acquitted himself of the responsibility of the crimes which marked his absence. He declared himself, by this absence, in open opposition with the government; and, as he meditated the overthrow of the committee, he could not remain, in the eyes of opinion, an accomplice of its acts. To abandon the committees, was a mute denunciation, more significative and more menacing than vain words. They waited to see on which side public opinion would range, and who would seize on it — the man or anarchy.

XV. But the retreat of Robespierre did not completely disarm him, even in the bosom of the committee itself; he still maintained an invisible hand in the focus of government. Saint-Just had just left for the army of the Rhine. His absence had left vacant in the Committee of Public Safety the presidency of the bureau of the General Police. Robespierre was charged with replacing his young colleague, and thus held in his hands the thread of every plot that could be contrived against him, and through the mediation of numerous spies of this police could catch his enemies in their own snares. Secret papers, found at his house after his fall, show the watchfulness he observed over all the most formidable members of the Convention and the committees. He kept up the main-spring of a proscribing government — information. He was no longer the head, but he was still the ear and eye of the revolutionary government. He was, too, the sole voice of the people, and had no doubt but that on the day he should raise that voice accusingly against his enemies, he should upset the weak scaffolding of their hatreds and intrigues against him. But he desired that they should enter further into the snare which his absence opened to them, and be thus wounded themselves to death with the weapons he abandoned to them. He silently accumulated secret reports of them, noted down all their comings and goings, marked their language, and put his own construction on their thoughts. The following are amongst the testimonies or suspicions which he collected to enable him to select, at the hour of vengeance, from amongst his victims or his partisans. "Legendre," (thus wrote his spies to him,) "was seen yesterday, walking with General Perrin; their conversation was mysterious and animated. They parted at eleven o'clock. Legendre entered the Convention at noon, and left at one o'clock. It was remarked whilst he was walking in the Tuileries, that his physiognomy was marked with care and *ennui*. He was accosted by a person unknown, and they conversed in a low tone."

"Thuriot went out at seven o'clock, with a female from an unknown house, and they proceeded to the garden of the palace Egalité, where they walked under the trees. They entered into the house to sup, and had not quitted it at midnight."

"Tallien remained at the Jacobins' yesterday until the close of the sittings; when he left he was accompanied by a man who is generally with him, carrying a large stick. They took each other's arm, and conversed in a low voice as they left the garden Egalité. They were together until midnight. Tallien then went in a hackney-coach to Rue de Belle-Perle. The man with the thick stick escaped without our discovering his residence. He wears a red and white waistcoat, with wide stripes. He has light hair, and is about Tallien's age.

"Tallien did not leave his home yesterday until three o'clock P. M. One of his confidants told us that having asked why he no longer was talked about in the Convention, Tallien replied that he was disgusted from the time they had told him, in the committee, that he had not guillotined enough persons at Bordeaux. He has trusty agents, who inform him of all that is going on in the committees, and when he leaves home he is escorted by four citizens, who watch him from a short distance.

"Thuriot, Charlier, Fouché, Bourdon de l'Oise, Gaston, and Bréard, had a secret conversation together to-day in the Convention."

"Bourdon de l'Oise was seen yesterday in the street, motionless, deep in thought, and not knowing which way to go."

"Tallien was buying some books to-day, for an hour in front of a bookseller's, and looking around with a restless and suspicious glance."

XVI. These notes hourly informed Robespierre of the steps of his enemies. Couthon watched for him the interior of the Committee of Public Safety; David and Lebas, the Committee of General Security; and Coffinhal, the Revolutionary Tribunal; Payan, the Commune. No movement, no symptom, could escape him. Notes, in his own hand, revealed his continual meditations over the characters and previous lives of the men whom he prepared to crush with the committees, or to raise to the government. He drew up, in his secret manuscripts, a catalogue of his suspicions or his confidences.

"Dubois-Crancé," he writes, "amenable to the law which banishes from Paris for having usurped false titles of nobility, sent away, as an intriguer, to the army at Cherbourg. He has said it was necessary to destroy the last Vendean. A friend of Danton: partisan of D'Orléans, with whom he was extremely intimate."

"Delmas, a *ci-devant* noble, a worn-out intriguer—connected with the Gironde—friend of Lacroix—ally of Danton—is intimate with Carnot."

"Thuriot never was any thing but a partisan of D'Orléans. His silence, since Danton's fall, contrasts with his eternal chattering before that period. He secretly agitates la Montagne, and excites the factious. He was at Danton's and Lacroix's dinner at Gusman's, and in other suspicious places."

"Bourdon de l'Oise was covered with crimes in La Vendée, when he was participator with the traitor Tunk in all his orgies, killing soldiers with his own hand. He joined treachery to his fury—has been a fierce defender of the system of atheism. On the day of the fête of the Supreme Being, he uttered, on this question, some very coarse sarcasms on this subject. He pointed out, with much affectation, to his colleagues, the marks of favour which the people bestowed on me. Ten days ago he was at Boulanger's, when he saw that citizen's niece. Taking down a brace of pistols from the mantlepiece, she said they were loaded. 'Well,' said he, 'if I kill myself, they will say you assassinated me, and you will be guillotined!' He then fired at the young girl, but the pistols did not go off, because there was no priming. This man always had the air of an assassin who meditates a crime, and seems pursued by the image of the scaffold and the furies."

"Léonard Bourdon, an intriguer despised by all—one of the inseparable accomplices of Hébert—Clootz' friend. Nothing can equal the baseness of the intrigues he practised to increase the number of his pupils, and to get scholars of the country. He was one of the first who introduced into the Convention the habit of debasing it by indecent customs, such as speaking with the hat on, and sitting in a cynical costume."

"Merlin, celebrated for the capitulation of Mayence, and more than suspected of having received the price."

"Montaut, *ci-devant* Marquis, seeking to avenge his humiliated caste by eternal denunciations against the Committee of Public Safety."

XVII. In opposition to these men, and his mistrusts of them, he inscribed the names of those whom he proposed to call to the high functions of the republic. There was Hermann for the Home Government; Payan or Jullien for Public Instruction; Henriot for the Mairie of Paris; Buchot or Fourcade for Foreign Affairs; D'Albarade for the Marine; Jaquier, brother-in-law of Saint-Just; Coffinhal, Subleyras, Arthur, Darthé, and a multitude of other obscure names, chosen from men amongst artisans, but remarkable for zeal, patriotism, and civic virtues.

Beside these names, fallen from his pen, to be gathered up again in the day of his power, were hundreds of letters signed or anonymous, which, at the same time, devoted to the tyrant of the Convention, apotheosis or death. These letters attested also, by their enthusiasm or invective, the powerful hold this name had taken, which, by itself, filled so many imaginations in the republic.

"Thou, who enlightenest the universe by thy writings," said one of these letters; "thou fillest the world with thy renown; thy principles are those of nature; thy language that of humanity: thou restorest men to their natal dignity. Second creator, thou regeneratest the human race!" "Robespierre! Robespierre!" says another; "I see you—you are looking to the Dictatorship, and you would destroy liberty. You have succeeded in removing the foremost supporters of the republic. It was thus that Richelieu contrived to reign, by causing the scaffold to flow with the blood of all enemies to his plans. You have contrived to get rid of Danton and Lacroix,—can you avert the blow from my hand, and the hands of twenty-two Brutuses like myself? Thirty times already I have tried to thrust a poisoned dagger into your heart. I would have shared this glory with others! You shall perish by the hand you do not suspect, and which presses yours!"

"I have seen thee," runs a third, "beside Pétion and Mirabeau, those sires of liberty; and now I see thee above corruption—proof in the bosom of corruption—erect in the midst of ruins. Do not trust to any but thyself for the execution of thy designs. Thou shalt be regarded in ages to come as the corner-stone of our constitution!"

"Thou livest still—tiger thirsting for the blood of France," says another epistle, "executioner of thy country! Thou still survivest! but thy hour approaches: this hand, which thy wandering eyes vainly seek to discover, is raised against thee. Every day I am with thee; every day, at every hour, I seek where to strike thee. Adieu: this very evening, gazing on thee, I will enjoy thy terror!"

Again: "Robespierre, column of the republic, soul of patriots, genius incorruptible, enlightened Montagnard, who seest all, foreseest all, unmaskest all, real orator—real philosopher, thou whom I know not, as God, but by thy miracles: the crown, the triumph are due to thee whilst awaiting until the civic incense smokes before the altar which we will raise to thee, and which posterity will revere so long as men shall know the reward of liberty and virtue!"

"You cannot choose a more favourable moment," (writes Payan, his most enlightened confederate in the Commune,) "to strike all the conspirators. Make, I repeat to you, an extended report, comprehending all the conspirators, exhibiting all the conspiracies combined into one, so that all may see therein the Fayettists, Royalists, Federalists, Hébertists, Dantonists, and the *Bourbons!* Make a great work of it! This letter may destroy me—burn it!"

XVIII. In the midst of these public correspondences, domestic correspondence distracted the statesman by calling his attention to the divisions in his family. "Our sister," writes his young brother, "has not one drop of blood which resembles ours. I have learned and seen of her so many things, that I consider her our greatest enemy. She abuses our stainless reputation to make us the law, and threatens to take such an infamous step as will destroy us. A decided measure must be taken with her to compel her to go to Arras, and thus remove to a distance from us a woman who will else cause us deep despair. She would confer upon us the reputation of bad brothers!"

"It is then necessary for your tranquillity, that I remove to a distance from you," writes this sister in her turn; "It is even requisite, I am told, for the public good, that I do not live in Paris. I ought, above all things, to deliver you from so odious a sight. To-morrow you may enter your apartment without any fear of meeting me. Let my being in Paris no longer make you uneasy—I have no desire to associate my friends in my disgrace. I have need only of a few days to calm the disorder of my ideas, and to decide me as to the place of my exile. The quarter where the Citoyenne Laporte dwells, is where I shall go to for a time, as the place in the whole republic where I should be the least known."

But if Robespierre did not allow himself to be called off from his watchfulness over his foes, either by his domestic annoyances, or his extreme indigence, or by the flatteries he received, or the threats of his correspondents; neither did the committee allow their hatred, alarm, and sullen conspiracies against him to repose for a moment. Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, Barrère, Vadier, Amar, Elie Lacoste endeavoured, by a redoubling of terror, to fortify themselves before the Convention and the Jacobins against any charges of indulgence which Robespierre might bring against them; on the other hand, they affected to cast on him solely the execution of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and to represent him in their disclosures as the insatiable decimator of his colleagues. "Let him demand," said Barrère, "the heads of Tallien, Bourdon, Legendre, and we may discuss the matter; but the heads of all the chiefs of the Convention who disquiet him, we cannot consent to such wholesale demand for blood!"

They circulated amongst the benches pretended lists of the heads demanded by Robespierre, in order to excite by terror those who were not excited by envy. Möise Bayle, an influential member of the Committee of Public Safety, one day confessed this duplicity of the committee with respect to Robespierre. "Tallien," said Möise Bayle, "has committed so many crimes, that of five hundred thousand heads he would not preserve one if they rendered him justice. The committee has proofs and documents; but it is sufficient for him to be attacked by Robespierre for us to keep silence."

The men menaced by Robespierre were warned by the care of the committee, — even those whom he had only viewed with indifference. Nightly councils were held, sometimes at Tallien's, sometimes at Barras', with Lecointre, Fréron, Barras, Tallien, Garnier de l'Aube, Rovère, Thirion, Geoffroy, and the two Bourdons. They there concocted the means of rendering his name unpopular, of parrying or preventing Robespierre's blows, unmasking his ambition, and branding his tyranny. The extreme danger, profound mystery, the scaffold prepared and at hand, gave to this rising opposition the character, secrecy, and desperation of a conspiracy. Tallien, Barras, and Fréron were the prime movers. These three deputies, recalled from their missions at Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Toulon, threatened with the severe reckoning which Robespierre demanded of them, had very reluctantly laid down the omnipotence of their functions. Long absolute proconsuls, sovereign arbiters of life and property, it cost them much to become again simple deputies, trembling before a master. The dictatorial power they had exercised at the armies, the habits of combat, the pride of victories, services done to the republic, the uniform they had worn at the head of the regiments, imprinted something more martial and more peremptory on their acts and wishes. Camps learn to despise tribunes. Barras, Fréron, and Tallien formed, in the midst of these men of words, the germ and nucleus of a military party, ready to cut with the sword the knot of the plot which was closing around them. Tallien communicated desperation, Fréron vengeance, Barras confidence, to the conspirators. They were three men of action, the more fit for hard blows, as they had the less superstition for the laws, and fewer scruples for liberty. Conspirators after Danton's mould, forgetting in revolutions principles, and seeing only circumstances; more in love with power and its enjoyment than of institutions; and desirous of saving, at any sacrifice, their heads, rather than laying them down calmly on the scaffold. Their tactics were to act — anticipate — strike.

## BOOK LIX.

I. WHILE these men, afterwards called the *Thermidoriens*, devised means to destroy tyranny by force, the committees were occupied, with more cunning, in adopting means of compromising, isolating, and surrounding Robespierre in public opinion and in the Convention. To resist the influence against him before the Jacobins, it was necessary to combat with rigour and ferocity in the application of the terrible law of the 22d Prairial. Never had terror struck *en masse* more guilty, more suspected, and more innocent people, than since the day when Robespierre had resolved to put a limit to it. Fouquier-Tinville, the juries, and the executioners could not suffice for the daily immolation commanded by the committees. The Committee of General Safety, which had been held in secret, and which had as yet played but a subaltern part, while Robespierre ruled and surpassed all in the Committee of Public Safety, had become insatiable for proscription since his absence. There was an emulation of rigour and death between the two committees. Vadier, Amar, Jagot, Louis du Bas-Rhin, Voulland, and Elie Lacoste, the ruling members of the Committee of General Safety, equalled Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes in ardour. "This goes well, — the harvest is good, —the baskets are filled," said one of them, signing the long lists to be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal. "I saw you on the Place de la Revolution, witnessing the guillotine performance," said the other. "Yes," replied the one; "I went there to laugh at the figure these wretches displayed." "They go to sneeze in the sack," said a third: "I often attend these executions." "Let us go, then, to-morrow," replied one still more sanguinary; "there will be a grand scene." These men went in effect to contemplate the executions; sometimes from the windows of a neighbouring house. Prodigal of blood, they were, however, honest, as regarded spoil. Billaud-Varennes, dying in misery at Cayenne, could not reproach himself with a farthing robbed from the republic, which he had decimated.

Vadier, arrived at extreme age, an exile, and a beggar in the land of the stranger, said to the son of one of those whom he had sent to the scaffold, "I am ninety-two years of age. The force of my opinions prolongs my days. I do not reproach myself with a single act of my life, unless it be for having misunderstood Robespierre, and taken a citizen for a tyrant."

Levasseur, an enthusiastic Montagnard, proscribed, and indigent at Brussels, exclaimed before one of his compatriots, who bewailed his destitute condition, "Go and tell your republicans at Paris, that you have seen old Levasseur making his own bed, to relieve his faithful companion of eighty years, and skimming with his own hand the pot of beans, the only nourishment of their misery." "And what do you think of Robespierre now?" asked young Français. "Robespierre!" replied Levasseur, "do not pronounce his name; it is our only remorse. La Montagne was bewildered when it sacrificed him." Old Souberbielle spoke in the same strain upon his death-bed. "The most bloody revolutions," he exclaimed, "are conscientious revolutions. Robespierre was the conscience of the revolution. They sacrificed him because they did not understand him." Thus conscience and opinion were so mingled in the minds of men of this period, that even, after the lapse of many years, they still took one for the other; and by proving their hands to be spotless of plunder, they believed they bore to God and to posterity a life pure from reproach; and proud of a fanatic theory, which even age had neither enlightened nor cooled.

II. But some of the proscribers were so habituated to blood, that they blended death with the elegancies, the enjoyments, and debauchery of their life. Cruel in the morning, voluptuous in the evening, they left the committees, the tribunal, or the site of the scaffold, to seat themselves around sumptuous tables, to enjoy music and poetry in private boxes, or to respire in the gardens about Paris with loose women, the forgetfulness of public affairs, the serenity of the season, leisure, and peace. They appeared bent upon devoting to enjoyment the hours, which they might not possess on the morrow, and which faction might at any moment abridge. They handled with indifference, against their enemies, the axe which they awaited with resignation for themselves. These country-houses were sometimes illegal assemblies, like those of the Dantonists at Sèvres.

Barrère, above all, was a man of refinement and elegance, —a flatterer of the Revolution, rather than an apostle of republican virtue. They had surnamed him "*the Anacreon of the Guillotine*," because he scattered in his reports soft images, blended with sinister decrees, like pale flowers upon blood. He had furnished a country-house in the village of Clichy. He retired there twice a week to refresh his ideas, and renew his writings. It is there that he prepared, it is said, reports as subtle as his own mind, in which he forced his style to adopt the accent, the tone, and the forms of all the ruling parties. It is there also that he conducted the epicureans of the Revolution, and, amongst others, the financier Dupin. Dupin was famed for his report against sixty contractors, whom he had condemned *en masse* to death. He was renowned for his inclination for the pleasures of the table. Beautiful women and artistes, proud of an intimacy with the masters of the republic, assembled at these festivals at Clichy. Light as pleasure, but discreet as death, these women heard all without retaining anything. Amar, the particular friend of Dupin, Voulland, Jagot, Barras, Fréron, Collot-d'Herbois, and the severe Vadier himself, met sometimes at this retreat, to consult with Barrère and other conventionalists, who were inimical to Robespierre. The pretext of pleasure shielded conspiracy. The plot was not suspected in this repose. It was, however, matured.

III. Barrère and his colleagues believed themselves obliged to feign a patriotism daily more doubtful, to avoid the suspicion of moderation. They ceased not to importune the Convention to implacable rigour. Robespierre, on his part, to preserve his ascendency over the committees, and to intimidate them by his accusations, thought himself compelled to exaggerate in himself the type of an inflexible patriot. The Jacobins seemed no longer to recognise revolutionary purity, but in the excess of suspicion. Whichever of the two parties should first relax the nerve of terror, was certain that instant to fall under the accusation of weakness, or of complicity with the enemies of the republic. This was the secret of these last periods of political murder. The situation became the more urgent, as it was about to break down. Terror was not only a passion, but a tactic. The less they desired it, the more they feigned it on both sides. The blood of innumerable victims served only to colour the mask of this execrable hypocrisy of patriotism.

We have seen that after the attempt to assassinate Collot d'Herbois, and after the shadow of assassination against Robespierre, the enthusiastic members of the Committees of General Safety had resolved to concentrate in the accusation of Ladmiral and Cécile Regnault, a host of *soi-disant* accomplices, entirely strangers to the two accused. They thus feigned a cruel solicitude for the life of Robespierre, and a striking vengeance for his danger. Elie Lacoste had finished the report, and Vadier had concurred in it. It will be remembered that Vadier had implicated in the accusation a crowd of innocent people, and that Robespierre had strenuously opposed this part of the report; that Vadier had insisted with the ferocity of an inquisitor who retains his prey; and that this altercation, degenerating into a quarrel and violence, had been the occasion of the defeat of Robespierre, of his tears of anger, and his definitive retreat from the committee. These are the circumstances, their secret causes, and their consequences over the double conspiracy which was plotted on one side amongst the intimates of Robespierre, and on the other in the illegal meetings of the two committees. Time has unravelled the chain of facts which seemed so opposed one to the other.

IV. The human mind requires the supernatural. Reason alone does not suffice to explain its sorrowful condition here below. It requires mystery and the marvellous. Mysteries are the shadow of infinity, borne upon the human mind. They prove infinity without explaining it. Man seeks eternally to penetrate these shades. Every nation, every age, and all civilisations have their mysteries. Puerile in the people, sublime in philosophers, they rise from the Sibyls to Plato, and re-descend from Plato to the most abject mountebanks. Since the philosophy of the eighteenth century had sapped the superstition of the middle ages in the mind of Europe, the passion for the supernatural had changed, not in its nature and credulity, but in its object. Never had a greater number of hidden doctrines, of chimerical philosophies, or transcendent philosophers fascinated the intellectual world. Swedenborg in Sweden; Weipsaut upon the Rhine; the Count of Saint-Germain, Bergasse, and Saint-Martin in France; the free-masons, the Rosicrucians, the illuminati, and the deists, in all parts, had founded schools, recruited the initiated, and dreamed mysteries. Mystic credulity every where succeeded popular credulity. The Revolution, in exciting further the imagination of men, had not diminished this instinctive attraction of humanity for the marvellous. It had exalted it, on the contrary, to delirium in certain minds, and even in the mass. The greater events, the more general are catastrophes, the more tragical are destinies, the more man also recognises his insufficiency, and the more he thinks he sees the hand of God itself excite events, the men and the circumstances which agitate them, and which crumble or arise around us. From this disposition of the human mind to the supernatural, and from this void which the disappearance of ancient worship left in the soul, a religious and political sect was hatched in the shade, and recruited thousands of sectaries in the population, so greedy of novelty.

V. There was then, in a retired and dreary quarter of the extremities of Paris, an old woman, named Catherine Théos, or the mother of God. This woman, possessed all her life by her own imagination, and rendered still weaker by the hallucination of her intellect, believed, or feigned to believe, herself endowed with the supernatural gifts of foresight and prophecy;—a superannuated Pythoness of another Endor, she perceived in Robespierre another Saul. She proclaimed him the chosen of God. She displayed him to her disciples as the Saviour of Israel, the regenerator of true religion, and the founder of perfect harmony upon earth. An old monk of the order of St. Bruno, named Dom Gerle, blending in his confused and contracted brain the mysticism of his first state with the passion of a religious transformation of the world, had linked himself with the prophetess of the Rue Contrescarpe, by that attraction which draws credulity to the marvellous. Dom Gerle had constituted himself the chief disciple of this inspired woman; he accumulated and elucidated her oracles. He had established with her a kind of church, where the faithful came in crowds to receive the initiation and the revelations of the new worship. Strange ceremonies, metaphorical language, convulsive inspirations, appeals to the Holy Ghost, young girls of celestial beauty, apparitions, chaunts, music, fraternal kisses, and the mystery which enveloped the sanctuary, gave to this budding religion the prestige of soul and of sense. In all the supernatural communications of the priestess with the neophytes, the Revolution was pointed out as the advent of the divine spirit upon the heads of the people. Priests and kings were to disappear from the face of the universe; Robespierre was represented, in hidden terms, as the Messiah, at once political and religious, who was to regulate and report every thing to God. The people in throngs initiated themselves in this faith.

VI. Dom Gerle had been a member of the Constituent Assembly. His leaning to pious credulity had already manifested itself there: he had carried to the tribune of this assembly the pretended revelations of a young girl, named Suzanne Labrousse. Universal laughter had received these puerilities. Suzanne Labrousse, ejected from Paris, had gone to prophesy at Rome. She had died there, the innocent martyr of her own hallucination, in the dungeons of the castle of Saint-Angelo. Dom Gerle was bigoted to her visions: seated by the side of Robespierre in the Assembly, and partaking the regenerative theories of the deputy of Arras, he constantly, since that period, conversed with him upon the reports with familiarity which amounted to enthusiasm and almost to worship. Robespierre often received the ancient monk in the house of Duplay. He entertained for Dom Gerle the affection and pity which a superior genius feels for the credulity which admires it. One easily pardons the superstition of which one is the object.

Dom Gerle discoursed often with Robespierre, regarding the prophecies of Catherine Théos upon his future greatness — Robespierre was not superstitious. His religion was but logic. He believed reason so divine, that he incessantly proclaimed it as the only dogma, and the only providence of the human race. The aim of his labours and the spirit of his institutions, were to make her reign alone and unassisted over nations. But whether his elevation had given to Robespierre at length a certain superstition in himself, or whether he desired to impart this superstition to others, to fortify his popularity by supernatural illusion, or whether he rather desired to draw to himself the favour of that part of the nation which regretted the ancient temples, and allow them to hope for a reconstruction of Christianity, he tolerated, if he did not favour, the meetings of Catherine Théos. It was his point of contact with Catholicism, and with the religious spirit which he desired to reattach to himself as one of the social forces. He received letters from the prophetess and from her disciples, dictated, as was said, by the spirit of revelation. There was in the proclamation of the Supreme Being, in the symbols of this ceremony, in the names even which he had given to God and nature, a resemblance with the names, the ceremonies and the signs of hidden worship. The opinion of the public, right or wrongly founded, was, that he desired to realise in his person a supreme pontificate, that the efforts of Dom Gerle, his confidant, were an essay of religious organisation, and that his initiating himself therein was but to flatter the dictator by his weakness or by his ambition. This prejudice brought to the temple of the Rue Contrescarpe more neophytes than faith.

VII. There was at this same moment, in one of the most sumptuous hotels in the centre of Paris, recently built by the opulent philosopher Helvetius, a young woman of incomparable beauty, if she had not had a daughter, sixteen years of age, as beautiful and seducing as her mother. This female was named Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe. Although she called herself the widow of a gentleman, who was slain on the day of the 5th to the 6th of October, whilst defending the Queen's Gate, at Versailles, and outwardly affected the tone and luxury of high life, there reigned over this lady, over her origin and her manners, a mystery and doubt, which allowed opinion to waver between admiration for her beauty, respect for her misfortunes, and the ambiguity of her position in society.

The house, attractive from so many titles, had assembled there, by a taste for the arts, for play and for pleasure, since the commencement of the Revolution, the eminent men of every faction. The royalists, the constituents, the Orleanists, and the Girondists—turn by turn—Mirabeau, Siéyès, Pétion, Chapelier, Buzot, Louvet, and Vergniaud had successively frequented it.

Madame Sainte-Amaranthe preserved, nevertheless, an ostensible attachment to the remembrances and hopes of royalty. She was linked with the royalists of the ancient aristocracy. She preserved in her saloon, without any great degree of mystery, the portraits of the king and queen. She did not disguise her veneration for these proscribed images of better times. The illusion of her charms appeared to remove danger from her. Nature defended her from the scaffold.

A young man of the ancient court, the son of M. de Sartines, minister of the police of Paris, had just espoused the daughter of Madame Sainte-Amaranthe. M. de Sartines had contracted an intimacy with an actress of the Italian theatre, Mademoiselle Grand-maison. Although abandoned by her lover, this young actress still wrote to him. She informed him of the progress and suspension of terror. Sartines, moved by so much constancy, came from time to time to Paris. He secretly saw there his old mistress. He knew from her the secrets of policy. Mademoiselle Grandmaison obtained them from Trial, an actor in the same theatre, a fiery patriot and a friend of Robespierre.

The hopes of clemency, conceived at the moment of the proclamation of the Supreme Being, were a snare in which the royalists, the suspected, and the proscribed served to allow themselves to be taken. They discoursed on all sides only of the omnipotence of the new Cromwell or the new Monk,—of his endeavours to extinguish religious persecutions—of his desire to abolish the scaffold—of his disposition to reconstruct order,—and of his after-thought of a reign, or restoration of a reign, which they attributed to him. The dispersed wrecks of the religious body and of the royalist party consoled themselves by these dreams. The popularity of Robespierre was perhaps greater at this moment, with the party of victims, than that of the executioners. Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe was dazzled with it. She desired to return to Paris, and to re-open her house to fêtes and pleasures in the midst of general mourning. She trusted herself to the genius of Robespierre. She burned with desire to know him, to attract him, and to draw him over to her opinions. In vain Mademoiselle Grandmaison, trembling for her lover, wrote to M. de Sartines that the time was inauspicious, that the committees and Robespierre were at variance, and that the axe of the guillotine was in suspense between the hoped for lenity and more active terror. Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe listened only to her illusions. She went, with her daughter, her son-in-law, and a boy of fifteen years, her son, to Paris.

VIII. There she confirmed herself more and more, by the discourse of some friends, in the dispositions which she imputed to the triumvir. Without doubt, these feelings were insinuated to her by agents of Robespierre. He sought at this moment to rally every thing to his name, even the royalists, by the vagueness of their hopes.

M. de Quesvremont, formerly an intimate of the house of Orléans, at this time courting familiarity with Robespierre, caused Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe to partake in his enthusiasm for the predestined man who, said he, awaited but the hour when his designs should be matured, and who granted to terror only what was not yet permitted to him to wrest from it. A fanatic disciple of Catherine Théos, M. de Quesvremont spoke to Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe of the new worship as of a profound conception of the restorer of order. He inspired her, as well as her daughter and her son-in-law, with the desire to initiate themselves. It was that, he said, which inspired confidence to Robespierre. A marchioness of Chastenais, an ardent royalist, and a more ardent disciple of the *Mother of God*, determined Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe to this adoption. Sartines, his mother-in-law, and his wife, were introduced by night to the hall of the Mother of God. These two beautiful royalists received on their foreheads the kiss of peace from the infirm sibyl, which was so soon to be for them the kiss of death.

Whether this condescension of these two young females were in effect an assurance in Robespierre's eyes, — whether the desire and pride of seeing the two most celebrated beauties in Paris bow before his genius, had penetrated his mind, or rather whether he desired to hold out through them a bait to the proscribed parties to attach them to the regular order which he contemplated, — he consented to an interview with his two admirers. Trial, a theatrical man and mutual friend, conducted Robespierre to the residence of Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe. He was there received as a dictator, who consents that his views should be guessed. He seated himself at table, in the midst of guests selected by himself. He allowed himself slightly to reprimand the excess which he had suffered too long. He spoke as a man who would return upon the guilty alone the guillotine which still struck so many innocent. He partly disclosed his views to allow hope to gleam therein.

IX. Whether it were from the indiscretion of his hosts, or the infidelity of the guests, the Committee of General Safety got wind of these interviews and partial confidences. Vadier had already introduced one of his agents, Sénart, into the meetings of the *Mère de Dieu*, to observe what went on, and there to note down the names of the principal initiated. Vadier knew that Robespierre was its idol. He supposed him the instigator of it. He suspected him since the 26th Prairial of desiring to attach the people to him by superstition, and caressing the superior classes by presages of clemency. Vadier desired to detect Robespierre at once in ridicule and in treason. He dared not directly attack a name which repulsed suspicion and disconcerted aggression. But he hoped thus to cast indirectly upon that name a ridicule which should reflect upon his power. It was furthermore a hardy enterprise — that of showing for the first time to the Convention that the friends of Robespierre were not pure, and that his sectarians were not inviolable.

The Committee of General Safety, secretly in accordance with the majority of the Committee of Public Safety, and with the conspirators of the meetings at Tallien's, ordered the arrest of the Marchioness of Chastenais, of M. de Quesvremont, of M. de Sartines, and of the whole family of Sainte-Amaranthe, without excepting the son, who had hardly attained his sixteenth year. They also caused Mademoiselle Grandmaison, and her domestic, Biret, to be arrested. They resolved to mix these accusations, though they were wholly distinct, in the grand act of accusation which Elie Lacoste drew up against Ladmiral and Cécile Renault, under the kindred and vague name of foreign conspiracy. Vadier had been charged to draw up the prior report against the sect of Catherine Théos. It was referred to the malignity of this old man to bestow upon the puerilities of Dom Gerle the sombre colours of a conspiracy, and a shade of ridicule which should darken the name of Robespierre.

That name, which all the world knew was concealed at the bottom of this affair, became the more visible as it was the less pronounced by Vadier. Robespierre had felt the blow by anticipation. But the poignard was sheathed in respect. He could not openly undertake the defence of these sectarians at the moment when he himself was accused of desiring to revive superstition to sanctify his dictatorship. He had forced himself, under pretext of contempt, to assign the reading of the report of Vadier to the Convention. Vadier had been inflexible. He was compelled to submit in silence to the sarcasms of the reporter, the smiles of the auditory, and the malignant insinuations against his part of Mahomet. Ridicule had besmirched this terrible name; suspicion had cast its shade over this incorruptibility. The friends of Robespierre had foreseen it. They warned him confidentially to beware of Vadier,—a kind of Brutus, feigning rusticity to disguise hatred. "Use every effort," wrote Payan to Robespierre, "to lessen in the eyes of opinion the importance which they desire to attach to the affair of Catherine Théos, and to convince the people that it is puerile charlatanism, which only merits the laughter and contempt of serious men!"

In short, soon afterwards Elie Lacoste made the report of the decree which proposed the transferring of all the accused to the Revolutionary Tribunal. There were joined to the assassin Ladmiral and to Cécile Renault, the father, the mother and even the brothers of this young girl,—M. de Sartines, Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe, Madame de Sartines, her daughter, her son, who had not even attained the age of crime; Messieurs de Laval-Montmorency, de Rohan-Rochefort; the Prince of St. Maurice; Messieurs de Sombreuil, father and son, escaped from the assassins of September; M. de Pons, and Michonis, municipal of the Temple, guilty of compassion and decency towards the captive princesses; Madame de Lamartinière, the widow of Epréménil; and lastly, the actress Grandmaison, punished for the love of Sartines, and even the servant of this actress, punished for his attachment to his mistress. They added to these sixty accused the porter of the house where Ladmiral had endeavoured to assassinate Collot d'Herbois, and his wife,—"*both guilty,*" said the accuser, "*of not having evinced sufficient joy when the assassin was arrested!*"

XI. Robespierre, on hearing the names of Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe, and of her family, was silent. He feared to appear to protect counter-revolutionists. He well knew that it was his name they struck at; but he timidly withdrew that name, not to appear struck himself: the deplorable situation of men who take popularity in lieu of conscience for the arbiter of their policy. They shield themselves with the bodies of innocent victims in place of their own intrepidity.

These sixty-two accused and pretended accomplices met together for the first time before the tribunal. Ladmiral was firm, Cécile Renault frank and touching. She demanded pardon of her father, of her mother, and of her brothers, for having led them by her heedlessness into the appearance of a crime which she had never conceived. She affirmed, in the presence of death, that the imputed project of assassination was but curiosity to behold a tyrant.

The Montmorencies, the Rohans, and the Sombreuils preserved the dignity of their innocence and their names. They did not belie, in the presence of death, the nobility of their blood. They died as their forefathers had fought. Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe fainted in the arms of her children. Sartines, on passing before Mademoiselle Grandmaison, bedewed the hands of the actress with his tears. He besought her to pardon him the death to which her attachment for him had led her. His wife was superior to her years in resignation, superior to her beauty in tenderness. She rejoiced to die with her mother, her husband, and her brother. She pressed them by turns in her arms. She did not even repel Mademoiselle Grandmaison, whom a cruel destiny associated in their misfortune. All jealousy and all distance disappeared in the presence of death. The dying form but one family.

With the view of striking the eyes of the people with greater display of guilt, they had clothed all the condemned, for the first time since Charlotte Corday, in the shirt of red woollen — the garb of assassins. An escort of cavalry, and pieces of cannon, charged with grape, preceded and followed the *cortége*. Eight tumbrils composed it. In the first, they made Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe ascend upon the first bench, Madame de Sartines and Mademoiselle Grandmaison, (these two victims of the same love,) upon the second! In the following tumbril, M. de Sartines and his youthful brother-in-law, M. de Sombreuil, and his son. The three other cars carried, by the side of the Montmorencies and the Rohans, the poor and faithful servant of Mademoiselle Grandmaison, Biret, who wept not for himself, he said, but over his mistress. The march was slow, the scaffold distant, the sky wintry, and the crowd immense. Every eye was raised towards this group of female heads, immediately to be severed from their bodies. The bright reflection of the red shirt relieved the whiteness of their necks, and the brilliancy of their complexion. The multitude were inebriated with this glare of beauty, which was so soon to be extinguished. The victims exchanged with each other sorrowful smiles, words in whispers, and looks of mutual commiseration. Ladmiral was indignant, and bewailed the fate of his *soi-disant* accomplices. "Not one of them," said he, "knew of my design: I alone desired to avenge humanity." Then, turning towards Cécile Renault, who prayed with fervour, "You wished to see a tyrant," he exclaimed, with ironical pity; "well, then, look! behold hundreds of them under your eyes!"

The march lasted three hours. They sacrificed the most obscure first, afterwards Cécile Renault, Mademoiselle Grandmaison, Ladmiral, Madame d'Epréménil, the gentlemen of the ancient monarchy, and the young Sainte-Amaranthe.

His sister and his mother saw his decapitated body thrown into the basket. Their turn approached. The daughter and the mother embraced each other with a long and last kiss, which the executioner interrupted. The head of the daughter rejoined that of her young brother. Madame de Sainte-Amaranthe died the last but one, Sartines the last. He had seen fall, during an execution of three quarters of an hour, the head of his mistress, that of his brother-in-law, loved as a son, that of his mother-in-law, and that of his wife. He was dead in every feeling before he died by the knife.

This carnage excited the people against Robespierre. The crime of his enemies recoiled upon him. They did not believe his influence so fallen in the committees as to permit executions which he did not desire. Above all, they did not believe him sufficiently cowardly to submit to crimes which he had condemned. Those who hoped in him were exasperated. His friends were astonished. His enemies encouraged each other. He had shown them the secret of his weakness. They redoubled their ferocity. They covered him for forty days with the blood which they spilt. He dared not avow nor repudiate this addition of murders. He struggled in vain under the responsibility of terror. Opinion cast it all back upon his name. An eternal lesson to public men, upon whom a just posterity heaps every crime against which they have not dared to protest.

XII. The language of Robespierre to the Jacobins during these forty days sympathised with the oppression of his soul. He was vague, obscure, and ambiguous as his situation. No one could comprehend whether he accused the committees of cruelty or of indulgence. One while he censured cruelty, at another moderation. His double-edged words were uttered incessantly, and never took effect. He kept his wrath in suspense; no one could guess whether it would fall upon the executioners or upon the victims. A political man who dares not to explain his views, alienates himself at once from both parties. "It is time, citizens," he exclaimed at last, a few days before the crisis, "that truth should make itself understood in this Assembly with accents as free and as masculine as those with which it has resounded during the greatest circumstances of the Revolution. Let us all go, as conspirators, to concert, in obscure resorts," (alluding to the meetings at Clichy) "the means of defending ourselves against the perfidious efforts of the wicked! I denounce to honest men a system which tends to withdraw the aristocracy from national justice, and to injure the country by striking patriots. When circumstances shall develop themselves, I will explain myself more clearly. At present I mention enough for those who do comprehend. It will never be in the power of any one to prevent me from stating the truth in the bosom of the national representation and of republicans. It is not in the power of tyrants and their satellites to disturb my courage. Let them spread libels against me, I shall still be always the same. If they forced me to renounce a part of the duties with which I am charged (the bureau of police), my function as a representative of the people would still remain to me, and I would wage war to the death against tyrants and conspirators." These tyrants and conspirators, vaguely described here, were Billaud-Varennes, Collot-d'Herbois, Barrère, Carnot, Léonard Bourdon, Vadier, and all the members of the committees. They dared not appear in the Jacobins since Robespierre alone reigned there, or they came as mutes, to hear and denounce all he uttered. They accused him, on leaving, of insinuating to the people a focus of plots in the Convention, and of preaching the necessity of a violent and insurrectional expurgation, like that of the 31st of May.

XIII. Some days later, Robespierre explained himself more openly. He assumed the attitude of a victim; he excited the interest, and almost the pity, of the patriots. "These monsters," he exclaimed, "devote to opprobrium every man whose austerity of manners and inflexible probity they doubt. It would be better worth while to return into the woods, than to dispute thus, amongst ourselves, the honours, renown, and wealth in the republic. We cannot found it but by protective institutions, and these institutions themselves can only be based upon the downfal of the incorrigible enemies of liberty and virtue. But these wretches shall not triumph," he continued; "these cowardly conspirators must renounce all their plots, or we must sacrifice our lives. I know what they will attempt; they attempt it every day; but the genius of liberty soars over patriots."

These expressions caused a lively sensation amongst the small number of Jacobins who surrounded him each evening. These instruments were ready to march with Robespierre to the goal he might indicate to them. They even exceeded his impulse. Their impatience openly aspired to an insurrection. They conjured their master to name his enemies. They swore to slay them in his cause. Buonarotti, Lebas, Payan, Couthon, Fleuriot-Lescot, Henriot, and Saint-Just incessantly reproached his temporising and his scruples. Robespierre persisted in refusing the dictatorship with inexplicable obstinacy. The people were ready to rise at his voice, and to place power and vengeance in his hands. The name of sedition struck him with horror. The shade of Catiline rose constantly before him. He respected, he said in the Convention, the country, the law, and the people. The idea of attaining by force to the representation, and of showing himself thus the violator of that national sovereignty which he had all his life professed, appeared to him a kind of sacrilege. He did not wish to stain his republican virtue or his memory with usurpation. He preferred, he said, to be the victim rather than the tyrant of his country. He desired power, no doubt; but he desired it granted, not forcibly acquired. He believed strongly in himself, in the omnipotence of his word, in his popular inviolability. He did not doubt of wresting from the Convention, by the force only of truth and persuasion, that authority which he did not desire to rend to pieces by disputing it with the tumultuous hand of sedition. He thought that the republic would of itself recognise in him the supremacy of genius and integrity. The idol of opinion, elevated by opinion, grown up, adulated, and deified for five years by opinion — he desired that opinion alone should proclaim him the last word and the first man of the republic. "Woe to men," he often repeated to his friends, "who sum up the country in themselves, and possess themselves of liberty as if their own property! Their country dies with them, and the revolutions which they appropriate to themselves are but changes of servitude." "No — no Cromwell," added he, incessantly; "not even I, myself!"

XIV. Under this feeling, Robespierre slowly prepared, as his only weapon, a discourse for the Convention — a discourse in which he should annihilate his enemies, by only causing their plots and his own integrity to strike the eyes of the people. He retouched at his leisure this profoundly studied speech, as vast as the republic, as theoretical as a philosophy, as impassioned as the Revolution. He there summed up with the pen of a Tacitus the tableau of every crime, every corruption, and every danger, which degraded, stained, or threatened the republic. He cast by continued allusion the responsibility of our disasters upon the government and the committees. He drew portraits so like and so personal of the vices of the Convention, that nothing more was wanting than to give them the name of his enemies. In conclusion, he vaguely adverted to the reform of revolutionary institutions, without determining these reforms, and he called upon the Convention to reflect. This conclusion, more imperative than if he had himself formed a decree of death against his enemies, wrested more terrible resolutions against those who envied him, and more absolute power for himself than he would have shadowed out. Tyranny has its modesty, and it was necessary to do it violence. That which is granted to it always exceeds that which it dares to ask.

This discourse was divided into two parts, and occupied two sittings. In the first part, Robespierre thundered without striking, and pointed out without naming. In the second part, which he reserved as a reply, if any one had the audacity to answer, he issued forth from the clouds, he broke out like thunder, he wrestled man to man, and body to body, with the hostile members of the committees. He determined the accusations and crimes. He named, he stigmatised, he struck, and dragged from the tribune to the scaffold the guilty, left until then in the shade. It was for this that he had sketched in the secret notes of his police the portraits destined to this public pillory. Armed beneath his clothing with these two discourses, Robespierre awaited the struggle with confidence. His adversaries began to mistrust themselves. No one had in his personal consideration the force to combat breast to breast with the idol of the Jacobins. They knew that the people remained faithful to him. His ascendency intimidated the Convention. Death might fall from a single gesture of his upon every head. In this perplexity Barrère insinuated an accommodation. Collot-d'Herbois spoke of misunderstanding; Billaud-Varennes himself pronounced the word "concord." The committees were beginning to bend under the sole effect of his absence. Officious negotiators interposed to avoid a rupture. Legendre courted him. Barras, Bourdon, Fréron, and Tallien, almost alone kept up the ferocity of their hatred and the fire of conspiracy. This fire was kindled in Tallien by love. One evening, on returning home, an unknown slipped a letter from Theresa Cabarus into his hand at the corner of the Rue de la Perle. This note, which a bribed gaoler had consented to allow to leave the prison of the Carmes, was written with blood. It only contained these words: "The administrator of police has just left; he came to announce to me that to-morrow I should ascend to the tribunal, that is to say, to the scaffold. This but little resembles the dream I had last night. If Robespierre no longer existed, the prisons would be open. But thanks to your unworthy cowardice, there will soon be no one in France capable of realising this event!"

When heroism is entirely extinguished, it is rekindled by love in the heart of woman. Tallien laconically responded — "Be you as prudent as I will be courageous, and be calm!"

XV. The negotiations, however, had ended in an interview between Robespierre and the principal members of the two committees. They consented to meet each other in the Committee of Public Safety. Couthon, Saint-Just, David, and Lebas were with Robespierre. Their countenances were reserved, their eyes lowered, and their mouths closed. It was felt that the two parties, in lending themselves to an endeavour to reconciliation, feared equally to allow their thoughts to transpire. Elie Lacoste mentioned the complaints of the committees. "You form a *triumvirate*," said he to Saint-Just, to Couthon, and to Robespierre. "A triumvirate," answered Couthon, "only forms three ideas which concentrate in the same opinion; triumvirs usurp every power, and we leave it all to you." "It is precisely of that we accuse you," exclaimed Collot-d'Herbois; "to withdraw from government, at so momentous a period, a force such as yours, is to betray and deliver liberty to your enemies." Then turning towards Robespierre, and assuming before him the theatrical gesture of a suppliant, he affected a desire to throw himself upon his knees. "I implore you, in the names of the country, and of your own glory," said he to him, "to allow yourself to be conquered by our frankness and abnegation: you are the first citizen of the republic, we are the second; we entertain for you all the respect due to your purity, your eloquence, and your genius;—return to us, understand us, let us sacrifice the intriguers who divide us, and let us save liberty by our union."

Robespierre appeared moved by the protestations of Collot-d'Herbois. He complained of the secret accusations which were disseminated against his pretended dictatorship; he affected a complete disinterestedness of power; he proposed even to renounce the direction of the office of police, which they reproached him with governing, and spoke vaguely of conspirators, whom it was absolutely necessary to crush in the Convention.

Carnot and Saint-Just had a very sharp explanation on the subject of the eighteen thousand men, whom Carnot had detached from the army of the North, exposed to all the forces of Cobourg, to send them to invade maritime Flanders. "You desire to usurp all," exclaimed Carnot. "You disconcert all my plans; you break the generals in my hands; you cut short the campaigns. I leave the interior to you—leave me the field of battle; or if you wish to take it like the rest, take also the responsibility of the frontiers! What will liberty be if you lose the country?"

Saint-Just defended himself with modesty, and declared himself filled with deference for the military genius of Carnot. Barrère was courteous and conciliatory. Billaud alone was silent. His silence disquieted Saint-Just. "There are men," said the young fanatic, "who from the sombre character of their physiognomy, and the paleness of their features, Lycurgus would have banished from Lacedemon." "There are men," replied Billaud, "who conceal their ambition under their youth, and play Alcibiades to become Pisistratus!"

At this name of Pisistratus, Robespierre thought himself alluded to. He desired to withdraw, but Robert Lindet prevented this with mild and wise advice. Billaud relaxed his frowning countenance, and stretchingh is hand to Robespierre, "At the bottom," said he, "I reproach you with nothing but perpetual suspicion; I lay aside willingly any suspicion I may have entertained of you. What have we to forgive each other? Have we not always thought or spoken the same upon all the great questions which have agitated the republic and the council?" "That is true," answered Robespierre; "but you sacrifice indiscriminately the innocent and the guilty,—aristocrats and patriots!" "Why are you not with us to select them?" "It is time," answered Robespierre, "to establish a tribunal of justice, which should not select, but should strike with the impartiality of the law, and not with the chances or the prejudices of factions." Discussion established itself upon this text. The stakes were the heads of thousands of citizens. Robespierre desiring to regulate and moderate terror, others declaring it more necessary than ever to exterminate and extirpate the conspirators. "Why, then, have drawn up the law of the 22d Prairial?" said Billaud. "Was it to let it sleep in the Statute Book?" "No," replied Robespierre: "it was to threaten, from a greater height, the enemies of the Revolution, and myself, if I elevated my head at any time above the laws!"

It was agreed, it is said, to come to an understanding at their leisure, upon the fate of small number of dangerous men who agitated the Convention, and to sacrifice them, if they were guilty, to the security of the republic, and the concord of the government. It was agreed that Saint-Just should make a report upon the situation of circumstances calculated to extinguish the appearance of dissension, and to demonstrate to the republic that the most perfect harmony was re-established amongst them. They separated with symptoms of reconciliation.

## BOOK LX.

I. THE symptoms of reconciliation which had appeared in the last meeting of Robespierre and of the Committee of Public Safety, were deceitful. Hardly were Fouché, Tallien, Barras, Fréron, Bourdon, Legendre, and their friends apprised of these overtures of peace, than they concluded that their heads would be the price of this concord. "Our heads yielded up," said they to Billaud-Varennes, to Collot, and to Vadier, "what will remain to you to defend? Your own.

Tyranny only disguises itself to approach you unperceived. When you shall have granted the heads of your only defenders in the Convention, the ambition of Robespierre will increase over our corpses, and will strike you, yourselves, with the arm you have lent him." Billaud, Collot, and Vadier were too enlightened by their own hatred not to comprehend these dangers. They swore that no single head in the Convention should be granted. The secret interviews between the threatened representatives and the members of the two committees became more frequent and more mysterious. They deliberated during the day, they conspired during the night. They plotted the destruction of Robespierre at some few steps from his house, at the residence of Courtois, who was bold enough to lend his room to the conspirators, who flattered him also with the belief of their desire to suppress the Terror.

II. The confidants of Robespierre insinuated to him that all reconciliation which the committees held out to him was a snare. "They humble themselves because they tremble," said they. "If your silence alone has reduced them to this abasement, what will become of them when you arise to accuse them? But if you accept to-day the appearance of a feigned reconciliation with them, of what can you accuse them in which you do not appear as an accomplice yourself? If they grant you the most insignificant and the most decried of your enemies, it is to preserve the most dangerous and the most deceitful. Offer them battle every day from the height of the tribune of the Jacobins. If they refuse it, their cowardice dishonours them, and accuses them; if they accept it, the people are with you."

Saint-Just, impatient of the temporising of Robespierre, set out unexpectedly, a fifth time, for the army of the Sambre-et-Meuse." I go to be killed," said he to Couthon. "The republicans have no longer any resting place but the tomb." Couthon after this period broke out in the Jacobins. "The Convention," he exclaimed, "is subjected by four or five wretches; for myself, I declare that they shall not subject me. When they said that Robespierre enfeebled himself, they pretended also that I was paralysed. They shall see that my heart possesses all its force."

The Jacobins, the sectionaries, Payan, Henriot, Dobsent, and Coffinhal,—above all, Henriot and his staff,—spoke loudly of an armed attack against the Convention. "If Robespierre will not be our chief," said openly the men of the Commune, "his name shall be our banner. We must violate his disinterestedness, or the republic will perish! Where is Danton? He would already have saved the people. Why should virtue have more scruple than ambition? The disinterestedness which loses liberty is more culpable than the ambition which saves it. Would to God," added they, "that Robespierre possessed the thirst of power, of which they accuse him! The republic needs an ambitious man: he is only a wise one!"

III. These remarks, which resounded incessantly in Robespierre's ears, the increasing fermentation which he witnessed in the Jacobins, the private reports of his spies, who secretly watched a sinister plot in the Convention, and the symptoms of a second 31st of May, which manifested themselves openly in the Commune,—the fear that insurrection, without a moderator and without limits, might display itself and possess the Convention, which he regarded as the only centre of the country, determined Robespierre at length not to act, but to speak. He preferred rather to trust the combat to the tribune alone, at the risk of being precipitated therefrom, than to fight at the head of an insurgent people, risking the mutilation of the national representation. He only recalled Saint-Just, his brother, and Lebas, to assist him in the crisis, or to die with him. No circumstance around Robespierre announced a great design. With the exception of four or five men of the people, carrying arms beneath their clothes, whom the Jacobins had charged, unknown to him, to follow him, and to guard his life, his appearance was that of the most humble citizen. He had never affected more simplicity and more modesty in his habits; he absented himself daily more and more; he appeared to give himself up to the contemplative delights of nature, whether it were to consult, as Numa, the oracle in solitude, or to sweeten the last days of life which his uncertain fate permitted him. He went no more to the committees, seldom to the Convention, but occasionally to the Jacobins. His door was only opened to a few friends; he wrote no more; he read much. He was not weighed down, but wearied. It has been said that he was in that state of philosophic repose where men, on the brink of a great catastrophe, sometimes place themselves, to allow their destiny alone to act, and to leave to it the course of events. An expression of melancholy softened his looks and features, generally too severe. The tone of his voice even was sweetened by an accent of sorrow. In the house, he avoided meeting the daughters of Duplay; that one particularly to whom he was to be united after the storm had passed. He discoursed no more of the prospect of a retired life, in a happy union, in the country. It was perceptible that his horizon was clouded as he approached it. Too much blood lay shed between him and happiness. A terrible dictatorship, or a solemn scaffold were the only images upon which he could henceforth ponder. He sought to escape from these reflections during the early days of Thermidor, by long excursions in the neighbourhood of Paris. Accompanied by some confidant, or alone, he wandered entire days under the trees of Meudon, of Saint Cloud, or of Viroflay.

It was said that in thus quitting Paris, where the cars full of victims rolled along, he put a space between remorse and himself. He usually carried a book under his coat. It was generally that of a philosopher, such as Rousseau, Raynal, Bernardin de Saint Pierre, or some sentimental poets, such as Gesner and Young,—a strange contrast between the sweetness of images, the serenity of nature, and the bitterness of the soul. He had the reveries and contemplations of a philosopher in the midst of the scenes of death and the proscriptions of a Marius.

IV. It has been related, that on the 7th of Thermidor, on the evening of the day when Robespierre expected the arrival of Saint-Just, and when he had resolved to stake his life against the restoration of the republic, he went for the last time to pass an entire day at the hermitage of Jean Jacques Rousseau, on the borders of the forest of Montmorency. Did he go to seek political inspiration under the trees beneath whose shade his master had written the *Contrat Social*, that code of democracy? Did he go to render to the spiritual philosopher the homage of a life which he was about to devote to his cause? No one knows. He passed, it is said, entire hours, with his face in his hands, leaning against the rustic gate which encloses the little garden. His features portrayed the struggle of punishment, and the pallor of death. It was the agony of remorse, of ambition, or of discouragement. Robespierre had time to collect in a single and last glance his past, his present, his morrow, the fate of the republic, and the future of the people and himself. If he died of agony, of repentance and anxiety, it was in this mute meditation.

V. A right intention at the commencement,—a voluntary devotion to the people representing in his eyes the oppressed portion of humanity, — a passionate regard for a revolution which rendered liberty to the bondman, equality to the humble, fraternity to the human race, reason to adoration,—indefatigable labour to render himself worthy of being one of the chief founders of this regeneration,—cruel humiliations submitted to by his name, his talent, his ideas and his renown, in order to issue from the obscurity wherein the names, the genius, and superiority of Mirabeau, Barnave, and of La Fayette confined him; his popularity, acquired piecemeal and always rent by calumny, his voluntary retreat into the most obscure ranks of the people, his life worn out by every privation, even that of love; his indigence, which allowed him only to partake with his family, still more indigent than himself, the morsel of bread which the nation bestowed upon its representatives; his very virtue raised in accusation against him; his disinterestedness styled hypocrisy by those who were incapable of comprehending it; his final triumph — a throne shattered, the people enfranchised; his name associated with victory, and the benedictions of the multitude, though anarchy at the moment was rending the reign of the people; unworthy rivals, such as Hébert and Marat, disputing with him the direction of the Revolution, and urging it to its ruin; a criminal struggle of vengeance and cruelty establishing itself between these rivals and himself, to dispute the empire of opinion; culpable sacrifices, made with repugnance, but made during three years to that popularity which desired to be nurtured with blood; the king's head demanded and obtained; that of the queen; those of thousands vanquished, slain after the combats; the Girondists sacrificed, despite the esteem which he bore to their principal orators; Danton himself, his proudest rival, and

Camille Desmoulins, his young disciple, thrown to the people upon suspicion, because there was no other name than his in the mouth of patriots; the omnipotence at length obtained in opinion, but on the condition of acquiring it incessantly by fresh sacrifices; the people desiring in their supreme legislator only an accuser; aspirations of clemency repulsed by the necessity of still immolating; a head demanded or given up to the necessity of each day; victory perhaps for the morrow, but nothing settled in the mind to consolidate and utilize this victory; confused and contradictory ideas; the horror of tyranny and the necessity of the dictatorship; imaginary plans, replete with the spirit of the Revolution, but without organisation to restrain them, without stay, and without strength to make them endure; words for institutions; virtue upon the lips, and sentence of death in the hand; an excited people, a servile Convention, corrupt committees, the republic reposing upon one head alone; an odious life, a death without results, a doubtful memory, a sinister name; the cry of blood not to be appeased, raising itself through all posterity against him,—all these thoughts no doubt assailed the soul of Robespierre during this examination of his ambition. One resource alone remained to him,—that was, to offer himself as an example to the republic,—to denounce to the world the men who corrupted liberty,—to die in the struggle against them, and to bequeath to the people, if not a government, at least a doctrine, and a martyrdom. He had evidently this last dream, but it was only a dream. The intention was lofty, the courage great, but the victim was not pure enough to sacrifice himself! It is the eternal misfortune of men who have stained their name with the blood of their fellows, to be unable to purify themselves, even with their own blood.

VI. Saint-Just, arrived from the army, had called repeatedly during the evening to confer with Robespierre. Wearied of waiting for him, he went, still covered with the dust of the camp, to the Committee of Public Safety. A profound silence, and unquiet looks received him there. He returned convinced that minds were irreconcileable, and that death was meditated. On the morrow Saint-Just, it is said, confirmed Robespierre in the idea of striking the last blow. On their side the committees expected an early attack;

their members prepared themselves for it. They knew the importance of the choice of a president in an assembly, where the president can at his will support or disarm the orator. They had raised Collot-d'Herbois to the presidency of the Convention.

Robespierre again read over and evidently corrected, by many revisals, his discourse. On leaving in the morning, he bade adieu to his hosts, with a more disturbed countenance than on other days. His friends, Duplay, and the daughters of his host, pressed round him, and shed tears. "You are about to encounter great danger to day;" said Duplay to him; "permit your friends to accompany you, and carry arms under your clothes." "No;" replied Robespierre; "I am surrounded by my name, and armed with the wishes of the people. Besides, the bulk of the Convention is pure; I have nothing to fear in the midst of the representation, upon which I desire to impose nothing, but only inspire safety."

He was dressed in the same costume which he had worn on the proclamation of the Supreme Being. He affected in his person the decency which he desired to restore to the manners of the nation. He doubtless intended that the people should recognise in this costume his living ensign. Lebas, Couthon, Saint-Just, and David, had reached the Assembly before him. The Convention was full, the tribunes chosen by the Jacobins. On entering, Robespierre requested to speak. His presence in the tribune, at the moment when he bore the secret and fate of his position in his mind, was an event. The conspirators, surprised by his appearance, hastily descended from their places to go and warn the members of the committees and their friends, scattered in the gardens and the halls, and to bring them back as quickly as possible to their benches. A profound silence preceded his speech. The masses have immense presentiments.

VII. At this moment Robespierre seemed designedly to clothe his countenance with a cloud, and to restrain the explosion of his long repressed ideas. He rolled his manuscript slowly in his right hand, as a weapon with which he was about to crush his enemies. He thus showed to his colleagues that he had pondered over his wrath, and that his speech was prepared. Here follows, to a certain extent, his discourse. All would regret to be ignorant of the speech which was a crisis, and which brought about by its counter-blow so vast a change. "Citizens!" said he, "let others trace to you flattering pictures, I am about to tell you wholesome truths. I am not about to realise the ridiculous terrors spread by perfidy, but I desire to extinguish, if it be possible, the torches of discord by the sole force of truth. I am about to defend in your presence your outraged authority and violated liberty. I shall defend myself also: you will not be surprised at it; you do not resemble the tyrants whom you combat. The cries of outraged innocence do not importune your ears, and you are not ignorant that this cause is not foreign to you.

"The revolutions which up to this day have changed the face of empires, have only had for their object a change of dynasty or the transition of power from one to many. The French Revolution is the first which was founded upon the theory of the rights of mankind and the principles of justice. Other revolutions only incite ambition — ours imposes virtue. The republic has glided, if we may so speak, between all factions, but it has found their power organised around it, and has also been incessantly persecuted since its birth in the persons of every man of good faith who fought for it. The friends of liberty seek to overthrow the power of tyrants by the force of truth—tyrants seek to destroy the defenders of liberty by calumny—they give the name of tyranny even to the ascendency of the principles of truth. When this system can prevail, liberty is lost; for it is in the nature of things that an influence must exist throughout, where men are assembled,—that of tyranny or that of reason. When this is prescribed as a crime, tyranny reigns, when good citizens are condemned in silence, the wicked must rule.

"Here it is necessary that I should open my heart; you have also need to hear the truth. What is then the foundation of this odious system of terror and calumny against vice? We, dreaded by patriots! We, who have rescued them from the hands of every faction conspiring against them! We, who dispute daily with those intriguing hypocrites, who dare still to oppress them! We, dreaded by the National Convention! and what are we without it? And who has defended the National Convention at the peril of his life? Who devoted himself for its preservation, when execrable factions conspired its ruin in the face of France. Who devoted himself for its glory, when the vile agents of tyranny preached atheism in its name. When so many others held a culpable silence respecting the crimes of their accomplices, and seemed to await the signal for carnage to bathe themselves in the blood of the representatives of the people. And for whom were the first blows of the conspirators destined? Which were the victims designated by Chaumette and Ronsin? Into what place did the band of assassins first march on opening the prisons? What are the objects of the calumnies and attempts of tyrants armed against the republic? Was there no poignard for us in the cargo which England sent to France and to Paris? It was we who were to be assassinated, and we who are designated as terrible. And what are then these great acts of severity with which we are reproached? Who have been the victims? Hébert, Ronsin, Chabot, Danton, Lacroix, Fabre-d'Eglantine and some other accomplices. Is it with their punishment that we are reproached? No one dares defend them. No! we have not been too severe: I call the republic which breathes to attest it. Is it we who have cast patriots into the dungeons, and carried terror into all classes? It is the monsters who have accused us. Is it we who, forgetting the crimes of the aristocracy and protecting traitors, have declared war against peaceable citizens, in order to discover guilt in every direction, and render the Revolution terrible to the people themselves? It is the monsters who have accused us. Is it we who, affecting ancient opinions, have caused the axe to gleam over the majority of the National Convention? It is the monsters who have accused us. Can they have already forgotten that we threw ourselves between them and their executioners?

"Such is, however, the basis of these projects of the dictatorship, and of the enterprises against the national representation. By what fatality has this weighty accusation been placed upon the head of one alone of its members? Strange project of a man to engage the National Convention to murder itself in detail by its own hands, in order to usurp the road to absolute power! Let others perceive the ridiculous side of these accusations; it is for me to see but the atrocity of them. You will at least render an account to public opinion of your frightful perseverance in pursuing the project of murdering all the friends of the country; — monsters who seek to ravish from me the esteem of the National Convention, the most glorious reward of a mortal's labour, which I have neither usurped nor surprised, but which I have been forced to acquire. To appear an object of terror in the eyes of that which one reveres and loves, is for a sensible and honest man the most frightful of punishments. To make him submit to it, is one of the greatest crimes.

"In the midst of the Convention it was pretended that La Montagne was menaced, because some members seated in that part of the hall thought themselves in danger, and to interest the entire National Convention in the same cause the affair of the sixty-two imprisoned deputies was revived, and to me were imputed all these events, to which I was an entire stranger. It was said that I desired to destroy the other portion of the National Convention. They depictured me here as the chief persecutor of the sixty-two deputies: there they accused me of defending them.

"Ah! truly, when at the risk of offending public opinion I alone wrested those from a precipitate decision whose ideas would have conducted me to the scaffold if they had triumphed; when on other occasions I opposed myself to all the fury of a hypocritical faction to reclaim the principles of strict equity towards those who had judged me with more precipitation, — I was far, doubtless, from thinking that they should render me an account of such conduct; but I was still farther from thinking that one day I should be accused of being the executioner of those towards whom I had fulfilled the most indispensable duties of probity, and the enemy of the national representation which I had served with devotion.

"This word dictatorship is, however, possessed of magical effect. It withers liberty, it abuses the government, it destroys the republic, and it degrades all the revolutionary institutions which are presented as the work of a single man. It renders national justice odious, which it presents as instituted by the ambition of a single man; it directs all hatred, and every poignard of fanaticism and aristocracy to one point.

"What terrible use the enemies of the republic have made of the name only of a Roman magistracy! And if their erudition is fatal to us, what will be their treasures and their intrigues. I do not speak of their armies; but let me be permitted to return to the Duke of York, and to all the royal writers, the patents of that ridiculous dignity which they were the first to send me. Kings are too insolent in arrogating to themselves the right, when they are not sure of preserving their own crowns, to distribute them to others.

"They call me a tyrant. If I were so, they would grovel at my feet. I would gorge them with gold; I would assure to them the right of committing every crime, and they would be grateful. If I were so, the kings whom we have vanquished, far from discovering to me what tender interest they take in our liberty, would lend me their aid, and I should make a compact with them. Tyranny is attained by the assistance of robbers. What becomes of those who combat them? They go to the tomb and to immortality. Which is the tyrant who protects me? Which is the faction to which I belong? It is yourselves. Which faction is it which has levelled and caused to disappear so many accredited traitors? It is you,—it is the people; they are the first cause. There is the faction to which I am devoted, and against which all crimes are leagued.

"Truth has doubtless its power, its wrath, and its despotism. It has touching and terrible accents, which resound forcibly in pure hearts, as well as in guilty consciences; and which falsehood can no more imitate than Salmoneus could imitate the thunder of heaven.

"Who am I whom they accuse? A slave of liberty,—a living martyr of the republic; the victim as much as the enemy of crime. All men of infamy insult me; the most indifferent, the most legitimate actions on the part of others are in me crimes: a man is calumniated from the moment he knows me. The delinquencies of others are pardoned; my zeal is imputed to me as a crime. Take from me my conscience, I am the most miserable of men.

"When the victims of their own perversity complained, they excused themselves by saying: *It is Robespierre who desires it,—we cannot help ourselves.* The infamous disciples of Hébert once held the same language. At the time when I denounced them they called themselves my friends. Afterwards they declared me convicted of moderation. It is still the same description of counter-revolutionists who persecuted patriotism. Until when will the honour and dignity of the National Convention be at the mercy of such men as these? But the feature I have just cited is but a branch of the system of a persecution still greater, of which I am the object. In developing this accusation of the dictatorship, placed in the order of the day by the tyrants, they charge me with all their iniquities, with all the wrongs of fortune, and all the severity rendered requisite by the safety of the country. They said to the nobles: *It is he alone who has proscribed you.* They said at the same time to the patriots: *He desires to save the nobles.* They told the priests: *It is he alone who pursues you;* without him you would be peaceable and triumphant. They said to the fanatics: *It is he who destroys religion.* To the persecuted patriots: *It is he who has ordered it, or desires not to prevent it.* They turned over to me all the complaints the causes of which I could prevent by saying, *Your fate depends on him alone.* Men posted in the public squares propagated this system daily. They were in the meetings of the Revolutionary Tribunal. In the places where the enemies of the country expiated their crimes they said: *Behold these unhappy condemned: who is the cause of this? Robespierre!* They were particularly anxious to prove that the Revolutionary Tribunal was a tribunal of blood, created by myself alone; and that I ruled absolutely, to slaughter alike men of worth and thieves; for they desired to raise up enemies against me of all descriptions. This cry resounded throughout all the prisons.

"They told every deputy who returned from a mission in the departments that I alone had instigated his recall. They reported faithfully to my colleagues all that I had said, and above all that which I never mentioned. When they had concocted this tempest of hatred, vengeance, terror, and wounded self-love, they thought it time to let it burst. But who were they, these calumniators?

"I can answer that the authors of this plan of calumny were first the Duke of York, Mr. Pitt, and every tyrant who was armed against us. Who afterwards? Ah! I dare not name them at this moment and in this place. I cannot resolve to tear off entirely the veil which covers this profound mystery of iniquity; but I can positively affirm, that amongst the authors of this plot are the agents of that system of corruption and extravagance the most powerful of any means invented by foreigners to destroy the republic, and that they are the impure apostles of atheism and immorality of which it is the basis.

"Tyranny had only required from men their property and their lives; these required even our consciences. With one hand they presented to us every evil; with the other wrested from us every hope. Atheism, accompanied by every crime, clothed the people in mourning and despair, and the national representation with contempt, suspicion, and opprobrium. A just indignation, repressed by terror, fermented silently in the hearts of men. A terrible and inevitable eruption rumbled in the bowels of the volcano, whilst paltry philosophers played upon its summit with profligate wretches. Such was the situation of the republic, that if the people had consented to suffer tyranny, or had they violently cast off the yoke, liberty would have been equally lost, for by its reaction it had mortally wounded the republic, and by its patience it would have rendered itself unworthy of it. Again, of all the prodigies of our Revolution, that which posterity will the least comprehend, is that we have been enabled to escape this danger. Let immortal thanks be rendered to you,—you have saved the country! Your decree of the 18th Floréal was in itself a revolution. You struck atheism and sacerdotal despotism; you have advanced by half a century the fatal hour of tyrants; you have re-attached to the cause of the Revolution every pure and generous heart; you have displayed it to the world in all the lustre of its celestial beauty. A day for ever fortunate, when the entire French people rose to render to the author of nature the only homage worthy of him. What a touching assemblage of every object which can enchant the regards and the hearts of men! Being of Beings! the day when the universe issued from thy omnipotent hands did it glitter with a more agreeable light in thy eyes than the day when, breaking the yoke of crime and of error, it appeared before thee worthy of thy regard and of thy destinies?

"That day had left upon France a profound impression of quiet, happiness, wisdom, and goodness. But when the people in whose presence all private vice disappeared, had returned to their domestic hearths, the intriguers reappeared, and the part of the charlatans recommenced. It is since this period that they have been seen to agitate themselves with fresh audacity, and seek to punish those who had disconcerted the most dangerous of all conspiracies. Will it be believed, that in the midst of the public joy, men have answered with signs of rage to the touching appeals of the people? Will one credit that the president of the National Convention, speaking to the assembled people, was insulted by them, and that these men were representatives of the people? What would be said, if the authors of the conspiracy of which I have just spoken were of the number of those who conducted Danton, Fabre, and Desmoulins to the scaffold? Cowards! they wished to make me descend with ignominy to the tomb! and I should have left upon earth but the memory of a tyrant! With what perfidy they abused my good faith! How they appeared to adopt the principles of all good citizens! How ingenious and fawning was their feigned friendship! Suddenly their countenances became clouded — a ferocious joy beamed in their eyes, — it was the moment when they believed that all their measures had been effectually taken to overwhelm me. To-day they caress me anew; their language is more affectionate than ever; three days back they were ready to denounce me as a Catiline, to-day they attribute to me the virtues of Cato. They require time to brew their criminal plots. How atrocious is their aim! but how despicable their means! Judge of them by one fact. I was charged for the moment, in the absence of my colleagues, to superintend an office of general police, recently and feebly organised in the Committee of General Safety. My short administration was limited to the issuing some thirty sentences, either to restore persecuted patriots to liberty, or to assure to us some enemies of the Revolution. Well, will it be believed, that this one word of *general police* has sufficed to place upon my head the responsibility of all the operations of the Committee of General Safety, of the errors of the constituted authorities, of the crimes of all my enemies! There is not, perhaps, an arrested individual, not an afflicted citizen, to whom they have not said of me, *Behold the author of your misfortunes; you would be happy and free if he did not exist!* How can I relate or divine all the descriptions of imposture which have been clandestinely insinuated, whether in the National Convention or elsewhere, to render me odious and dreaded? I will confine myself to saying, for upwards of six weeks the nature and strength of the calumny, the impossibility of doing good, and preventing evil, has compelled me absolutely to abandon my functions as a member of the Committee of Public Safety; and I swear that in so doing I have only consulted my reason and the country. Whatever may occur, it is at least six weeks since my dictatorship expired, and since I have held any kind of influence over the government. Has patriotism met with more protection? are the factious more timid? is the country more prosperous? I wish it were so. But this influence was restricted at all times to pleading the cause of the country before the national representation and the tribunal of public reason; it has been permitted to me to combat the factions which threatened you; I have desired to root out the system of corruption and disorder which they had established, and which I regard as the only obstacle to the security of the republic. I have considered that it could only be rested on the eternal basis of morality. Every thing is leagued against me, and against those who had the same principles. My life! Oh, I abandon it to them without regret! I have the experience of the past, and see the future! What friend of the country can desire to survive the moment when he is no longer permitted to serve and to defend innocence when oppressed? Why remain in an order of things where intrigue triumphs eternally over truth; where justice is a falsehood, where the vilest passions or the most ridiculous fears occupy the place of the most sacred interests of humanity in the heart? How support the punishment of seeing the horrible succession of traitors, more or less clever, conceal their hideous souls under the veil of virtue and even of friendship; but who will leave to posterity the embarrassment of deciding which of the enemies of our country was the most cowardly and atrocious? In beholding the multitude of vices which the torrent of the Revolution has mixed up *pêle-mêle* with its civic virtues, I feared sometimes, I avow it, that it might be stained in the eyes of posterity by the impure admixture of perverse men, who introduced themselves amongst the sincere friends of humanity; and I rejoiced to see the fury of the Varros and Catilines of my country trace a broad line of demarcation between them and all men of worth. I have seen in history all the defenders of liberty overwhelmed with calumny. But their oppressors are dead also! The good and the wicked disappear from the earth, but in different conditions. Frenchmen! do not permit your enemies to dare to abase your souls and enervate your virtues by their desolating doctrine! No, Chaumette, no! death is not an eternal sleep! Citizens! efface from the tombs this maxim, engraven by sacrilegious hands, which throws a funeral crape over nature, which discourages oppressed innocence, and insults death. Write there rather this,—*Death is the commencement of immortality.* I promised, some time ago, to leave a testament terrible to the oppressors of the country; I am about to publish it, with the independence which belongs to the situation in which I am placed; I bequeath them the terrible truth and death!

"Why do those who said to you recently, *I declare to you that we walk on a volcano*, believe to-day that they walk on roses? Yesterday they believed in conspiracies. I declare that I believe in them at this moment. Those who tell you that the foundation of the republic is so easy an enterprise deceive you, or rather they do not deceive any one. Where are the wise institutions,—where is the plan of regeneration which justify this ambitious language? Are we solely occupied with this grand object? What do I say! Would one not desire to proscribe those who had prepared it? We hire them to-day, because we think ourselves weak; to-morrow, then, we will proscribe them, if we become stronger. In four days, they say, all injustice will be repaired. Why has it been committed with impunity for four months? And how, in four days, will the authors of our ills be corrected or driven away? They speak to you much of your victories with an academic trifling, which would cause you to believe that they cost your heroes neither blood nor toil. Related with less pomp, they would appear more great. It is not either by rhetorical phrases or even by warlike exploits that we shall subjugate Europe, but by the wisdom of our laws, by the majesty of our deliberations, and by the grandeur of our characters. What has been done to turn our military successes to the profit of our principles, to prevent the dangers of victory, or to assure us the fruits of it? This is a part of the plan of conspiracy. And to whom must these evils be imputed? To ourselves, to our cowardly weakness for crime, and to our culpable abandonment of principles proclaimed by ourselves. Do not let us deceive ourselves; to found an immense republic, upon the basis of reason and equality, to unite in a strong band all the parties of this immense empire, is not an enterprise which vanity can consummate: it is the master-piece of virtue and human reason. Every faction grows from the bosom of a great revolution, — how suppress them if you do not submit all their passions to justice? You have not any other guarantee of liberty than the rigorous observance of the principles of the universal morality which you have proclaimed. What signifies to us the conquest of kings, if we are vanquished by the vices which bring forth tyranny! For myself, whose existence appears to the enemies of my country an obstacle to their odious projects, I consent willingly to make them a sacrifice of it, if their frightful empire must still endure. Oh! who would desire to behold longer this succession of traitors, more or less clever, concealing their hideous souls under a mask of virtue, until the moment when their guilt appears matured! Who would leave to posterity the trouble of deciding which of the enemies of our country was the most cowardly and atrocious!

"People! remember that if justice does not reign in the republic with absolute sway, and if this word does not signify the love of equality and of country, liberty is but a vain name! People! you whom they fear, whom they flatter and despise; you, the recognised sovereign, whom they treat as slaves — remember that wheresoever justice does not reign, there are the passions of the magistrates, and that the people have changed their fetters, but not their destiny!

"Know that every man who would exalt himself to defend the cause of public morality, will be loaded with affront, and proscribed by scoundrels: know that every friend of liberty will be always placed between a duty and a calumny; that those who cannot be accused of having betrayed, will be accused of ambition; that the influence of probity and principle will be compared to the force of tyranny and the violence of faction; that your confidence and esteem will be titles of proscription for all your friends; that the cries of oppressed patriotism will be called the cry of sedition; and that not daring to attack you *en masse*, they will proscribe you in detail in the persons of all good citizens, even until these ambitious men have organised their tyranny. Such is the empire of the tyrants armed against us; such is the influence of their league with corrupt men, always inclined to serve them. Thus then the wretches impose upon us the law to betray the people, under the penalty of being called dictator: shall we subscribe to this law? No! let us defend the people at the risk of being esteemed for it; let them hasten to the scaffold by the path of crime, and we by that of virtue!"

VIII. This long discourse, of which we, however, have only given the pith, curtailing all which was but the pretext of the position, was heard with an apparent respect, which served as a mask to sentiments and countenances. No one would have dared to utter a single murmur against the wisdom and authority of such a man. Each awaited until a general mark of disapproval should break out to mingle his own disapprobation. To signalise themselves was to destroy themselves. Each one trembled before all. The general hypocrisy of admiration wore the appearance of unanimous approbation. Robespierre reseated himself upon his bench, traversing, with his eye, the ranks which bowed to him, and forced themselves to smile. A long pause appeared to weigh upon the Convention. It knew not as yet whether it ought to be indignant or to applaud. Revolt was a declaration of war, applause was servitude. Silence shrouded its irresolution. One single voice broke it.

It was the voice of Lecointre. He demanded that Robespierre's discourse should be printed. By this course the Convention adopted it.

This proposition was about to be voted, when Bourdon de l'Oise, who had read his own name, under all the allusions of Robespierre, and who felt that further audacity would not proscribe him more, resolved to interrogate the courage or the cowardice of his colleagues. Versed in the symptoms of large assemblies, the silence of the Convention appeared to him the commencement of enfranchisement. One word might change that into revolt. To cast this word into the assembly, should it prove futile, was to stake his head. Bourdon de l'Oise staked it.

"I oppose," he exclaimed, "the printing of this discourse. It contains matter sufficiently weighty to demand examination. It may comprise errors as well as truths. It is but prudent in the Convention to return it to the examination of the two Committees of Public Safety and General Security."

No explosion displayed itself against an objection which would have appeared on the preceding evening a blasphemy. The hearts of the conspirators were reanimated. Robespierre was astonished at his fall. Barrère looked at him, and thought that no adulation could be better timed than that which might raise humbled pride. He supported the printing of the discourse in terms which both parties could equally accept.

Couthon, encouraged by the defection of Barrère, demanded not only the printing, but the transmission of it to all the communes of the republic. This printing of the discourse was voted triumphantly. The defeat of Robespierre's enemies was complete if they could not rescind this vote. Vadier rose, and devoted himself. Robespierre desired to interrupt his speech. Vadier insisted upon speaking. "I will speak," said he, with the tranquillity which appertains to virtue. He substantiated the report which he had made regarding Catherine Théos, attacked by Robespierre. He caused it, in covert terms, to be understood, that his hand was filled with mysteries, in which his accusers themselves might be enveloped. He defended the Committee of General Safety.

"And I also enter the arena," said then the austere and honest Cambon, "although I have not sought to form a party around me. I do not come armed with long and prepared orations. All parties have found me intrepid upon their path, opposing, to their ambition, the barrier of my patriotism. It is time, at length, to tell the entire truth. One single man paralyses the National Convention, and that man is Robespierre!" At these words, which broke out as the hitherto repressed thought of a worthy man, Robespierre arose, and apologised for having attacked Cambon's integrity.

Billaud-Varennes demanded that the two committees should submit their conduct to inspection. "It is not the committee that I attack," replied Robespierre; "but to avoid altercations, I demand that I may explain myself more completely." "We all demand it!" exclaimed, rising, two hundred members of La Montagne.

Billaud-Varennes continued: "Yes!" said he; "Robespierre is right, the mask must be lifted off every face which wears it; and if it be true that we are no longer free, I had rather that my dead body should serve as a throne to an ambitious man, than that I should, by my silence, become the accomplice of his misdeeds."

Panis, long the friend of, and afterwards proscribed by Robespierre, in the Jacobins, reproached him with reigning over all, and only proscribing those whom he himself suspected. "My heart is bursting," exclaimed Panis; "it is time I gave it utterance. They paint me as a wretch dripping with blood, and gorged with plunder, and yet I have only acquired, in the Revolution, the means of buying a sword for my son to march to the frontiers, and a garment for my daughters. Robespierre drew up a list, in which he put down my name, and devoted my head for the first condemnation *en masse!*"

A shout of indignation here burst forth against the tyrant. Robespierre met it with an unchanged mien. "Throwing aside my buckler," said he, "I have offered myself uncovered to my enemies. I retract nothing; I do not flatter any one, I fear no one; I neither require the support nor the indulgence of any one; I do not seek to make a party for myself. I have done my duty, that is enough for me; let others do theirs. And I have had the courage to come and state, in the bosom of the Assembly, truths which I believe necessary to the safety of the country, and they are about to subject my accusation to the consideration of those whom I accuse!"

"When," cried Charlier, "a man boasts of having courage and virtue, he should also possess truth. Name those whom you accuse!" "Yes—name—name!" repeated a group of the Montagnards rising. Robespierre was mute. Bréard asserted that the Convention owed it to itself to revoke the vote, and an immense majority voted with him.

IX. Robespierre, humiliated, but not subdued, felt that the Convention was gone from his grasp. He left it, and hastened, accompanied with a body of friends, to the tribune of the Jacobins, where his party hailed him as the martyr of truth wounded by the people. He read to them his discourse repudiated by the Convention. Furious cries, shouts of rage, gestures of admiration, interrupted and crowned this harangue. When these had ceased, Robespierre, whose voice was exhausted, assuming a resigned attitude, said, "Brothers, the discourse you have heard is my last will and testament!" "No, no; you shall live, or we will all die," shouted the tribunes. "Yes, it is my last testament," he repeated with prophetic solemnity — "my last testament. I have seen today the league of villains is so strong that I cannot hope to escape them. I yield without a murmur! I leave to you my memory; it will be dear to you, and you will defend it!"

These last words, this coming death, this adieu, which included at once reproach and resignation, affected the Jacobins even to tears. Coffinhal, Duplay, Payan, Buonarotti, Lebas, and David rose and called on Robespierre, conjuring him to defend his country and himself. Henriot exclaimed that he had still sufficient artillerymen to make the Convention vote. Robespierre, excited by such enthusiasm, exclaimed,— "Well then — yes — separate the wicked from the weak! Free the Convention from the wretches who oppress it! Restore to it the liberty which it expects from you as on the 31st of May and the 2d of June! Advance, if necessary, and save the country. If in these generous efforts we fail, then, my friends, you shall see me drink hemlock calmly!" David, interrupting him at these words, said, "Robespierre, if you drink hemlock, I will drink it with you!" "All — all — we will perish with you!" cried thousands of devoted voices. "To perish with you is to perish with the people!"

Couthon, who marked with calmness this general ebullition, was desirous of profiting by the moment, to draw the sword, and separate the Jacobins from the Convention by some overt act. He required that the unworthy members of the Convention then present should be expelled. At these words Collot-d'Herbois, Legendre, and Bourdon, who had come to the meeting to watch, were pointed out, and desired to quit the ranks of patriots. Some withdrew. Collot rushed into the tribune, where, defending himself, he talked of his early joining the ranks of Jacobins, and pointed to the wounds in his breast given by Ladmiral. He was hooted, and knives brandished over his head, and he escaped with difficulty. Payan then whispered to Robespierre, proposing to take advantage of the excitement, and go at once and seize the two committees then sitting at the Tuileries.

X. The impulse was given — the path short — success easy — the blow decisive.

The Convention, without any head, would have fallen next day at Robespierre's feet, and have returned thanks to its avenger. But, whilst Collot was being turned out, the leader of the Jacobins resumed his scruples of legality. He believed that the heart of the people would enable him to dispense with employing its hand, and that the Convention dared not assail a life thus protected by fanaticism. He refused. At this refusal,—honest, perhaps, but impolitic,—Coffinhal, taking Payan by the arm, and leading him out of the room, said, "You see plainly that his virtue could not consent to insurrection. Well! since he will not be saved, let us prepare to defend ourselves, and avenge him!"

At these words Coffinhal and Payan went to the Commune, and passed the night with Henriot in concerting for the next day an insurrectional rising of the people. Coffinhal, an Auvergnat, had the massive frame, figure, and masculine vigour of the Alpine races of his country. The energy of his mind responded to that of his muscles. Payan was the head, and Coffinhal the hand, of this night and morrow.

XI. Whilst Robespierre thus excited and then allowed the Jacobins to sink to inertness, Saint-Just went to the Committee of Public Safety. His colleagues received him with sad looks and embarrassed language. "What brings you from the army?" inquired Billaud-Varennes. "The report you desired me to make to the Convention," replied Saint-Just. "Read it then," was the response. "It is not yet ready," answered the young representative. Barrère insinuatingly advised him not to allow his friendship for Robespierre to place him in opposition with the committee. At this moment Collot d'Herbois pushed the door open violently, and with a frightened air, staggering step, and rent garments, entered the room precipitately. He had just returned from the Jacobins. He saw Saint-Just, who said to him, "What is doing at the Jacobins?" "Do you ask such a question?" cried Collot, rushing towards Saint-Just; "do you ask such a question! you, the accomplice of Robespierre! you, who with Couthon and him, have formed a triumvirate, whose first act is to be our assassination?"

Collot then hastily narrated to his colleagues the scene of the Jacobins, the reading of the harangue, the calls to insurrection, the expulsion of the members of the Convention, the hootings, imprecations, daggers; then, turning to Saint-Just, he seized him by the collar, and shaking him like a wrestler who seeks to throw his opponent at his feet, he exclaimed, "And you are here to spy upon and denounce your colleagues! Your hands are full of notes you have taken against us. You are concealing under your coat the infamous report, whose conclusions are death to all of us. You shall not go hence until you have shown us those notes, and exposed your own infamy." As he spoke, Collot endeavoured to snatch from Saint-Just's hands, or find in his pockets the papers he believed to contain proofs of his perfidy; Carnot, Barrère, Robert Lindet, Billaud-Varennes threw themselves between the two adversaries, protecting Saint-Just and endeavouring to restore Collot to decency and regret for his violence. He could only declare that Saint-Just should not quit them until he had sworn that his report should not contain any thing against his colleagues, nor before he had communicated to them the report previously to reading it to the committee.

Saint-Just swore, and said frankly that he should move that Collot and Billaud-Varennes should be recalled to the Convention, in order that the divisions which rent the committee should terminate. He refused to remain longer at the meeting, when his presence was suspected by his colleagues.

After his departure, the members of the committee resolved, on the proposition of Collot d'Herbois, that Henriot should be arrested next day for his language at the Jacobins, and that Fleuriot, the national agent in Paris, should be summoned to the bar of the Convention. They separated at sunrise, each hastening to his friends, to inform them of the resolutions and perils of the day.

XII. Tallien, Fréron, Barras, Fouché, Dubois-Crancé, Bourdon, and their friends, whose numbers were increasing, had not slept that night: witnesses of the fluctuation of the Convention, aware of the tumults at the Jacobins, assured of a struggle for life and death on the morrow — they had employed, in conferences, emissaries, and nocturnal journeys the few hours time left to them to save their heads. The result of the conflict must depend, out of doors, on the energy of the men who would defend the Convention with a handful of bayonets against a forest of pikes and pieces of cannon; within, on the results of the next sitting. For the outside, they resolved in confiding the command to Barras, the sword of the party; for the sitting, they resolved to wrest it from Robespierre, by precluding him from the tribune. To contend against words by words was useless; to stifle it by silence was the surer mode. For this there were two things necessary; the one, a president favourable to Robespierre's opponents — and this they had in Collot d'Herbois; and a majority resolved on sacrificing him — and this was to be obtained by dividing La Montagne; by reviving the vengeance still bleeding in the hearts of Danton's friends; by detaching the centre, until then obedient to Robespierre's voice, but obedient rather from fear than love; in fact, by summoning all the victims, all the resentments, and accumulating them on the head of one man. Skilful and persuasive emissaries were employed all night, to eradicate from the members of La Plaine the hopes they pertinaciously nourished in Robespierre's designs, and to efface from the minds of these remains of the Gironde, the gratitude they owed him for having saved the lives of the seventy-three, in spite of the committees.

Thrice did the negotiations fail, and thrice were they renewed. Siéyès, Durand-Maillane, and some influential Conventionalists who led this plastic body in the Convention, still hesitated between the committees, whom they detested, and the man who had saved their lives, who protected them with his indulgence, and whose dictatorship, after all, would be a more secure shelter than the anarchy of the Convention. An unmolested power grows moderate. A fierce struggle of ambition leaves no security either to the actors or the spectators of the combat.

The reliques of the Girondists, grouped in this centre, easily resigned themselves to servitude, providing it were safe. They were weary of crises, of scaffolds; they only asked for life. The more intrepid, such as Boissy-d'Anglas, awaited the hour of reaction to overthrow alike the anarchists and tyrants of committees; whilst others leaned towards the party who should promise them, not the greater influence, but a more protracted existence. Each of the two parties assured them that theirs was the party. The Plaine trembled, for fear of being deceived, and did not come to a decision before daybreak. Bourdon de l'Oise convinced the leaders of the former Girondists that their safety lay in the liberty and equilibrium restored to the Convention; that to surrender themselves to a dictator such as Robespierre, was to submit, not to a master, but to a cowardly serf of the people; that this people had already demanded of him the heads of a certain number of his colleagues, and would inevitably exact all; that this man had no power but that which he derived from the Jacobins, and that the power of the Jacobins was an exhaustless thirst for blood; that Robespierre could only retain the Jacobins by satisfying them daily; that to give him supreme power was to hand to him the knife with which he would cut their throats. Bourdon reassured these wavering men as to the intentions of the committees, proved to them that Robespierre once removed from this group of decemvirs, the bundle of sticks would fall asunder, and that the committees, disarmed, renewed, extended and filled up by their own members, would no longer be the sword but the hand of the Convention. At length, these arguments decided Boissy-d'Anglas, Siéyès, Durand-Maillane, and their friends. They swore alliance for an hour with La Montagne.

XIII. Robespierre was ignorant of this defection of La Plaine, and relied implicitly on these men, until now so plastic in his hands. "I have no further hope from La Montagne," he said, at daybreak, to his friends who surrounded him, enumerating his probabilities of triumph. "They see in me a tyrant from whom they would deliver themselves, because I would be a moderator; but the mass of the Convention is with me."

Daylight surprised him under this illusion, and he saw it arrive with confidence. The Jacobins presaged and prepared his success. Coffinhal secured the faubourgs; Henriot harangued the Commune; Payan convoked the members of the municipality to a permanent union; Henriot, followed by his aides-de-camp, and already on horseback, in spite of the drunkenness of the previous night, rode up and down the streets adjacent to the Hôtel de Ville, and placed batteries of cannon on the bridges and the Place du Carrousel. The deputies, fatigued with a long night, and uncertain of the events of the day, betook themselves to their posts from all quarters. The people, out of work and restless, were stirring in the streets, fully expecting some great event. Robespierre allowed himself to be waited for in the Convention. There was a report that, humiliated at the sitting of the previous evening, he refused any further contest in the tribune, and would only return to the Convention, weapons in hand, and at the head of an insurrection. His presence with Couthon and Saint-Just dissipated these reports.

Robespierre, attired with more care than usual, advanced with slow step, assured countenance, and bold front. The certainty of success was evident in his glance. He seated himself without a gesture, smile, or look at any one. Couthon, Lebas, Saint-Just, and young Robespierre expressed, by their demeanour, the same resolution. They took the attitude of either men accused or predominant; but still rather as colleagues and equals. The leaders of La Plaine arrived last, having been with the chiefs of La Montagne in the lobbies before they appeared. These men of the two parties, separated until now by horror and mutual contempt, shook hands, and made signals of intelligence to each other. Bourdon de l'Oise meeting Durand-Maillane in the gallery entrance to the chamber, exclaimed, "Worthy men, those on the right side." Tallien was every where accosting each doubtful representative in the Chamber of Liberty, from which the chamber was visible. Some he roused; others he alarmed. He declared the measures combined and the results certain. He inspired all with his own feeling, when suddenly seeing Saint-Just about to speak, he said, "Let us go in,— Saint-Just is in the tribune; we must bring this to a conclusion;" and he resumed his seat with great precipitation.

XIV. Saint-Just began to speak amidst the subsiding murmurs of an assembly just met; his speech, cut short by death, was covered with erasures, and it was evident, from the numerous corrections, how often he had written and rewritten it, and how often reflection had succeeded indignation. His language was an enigma, of which the key was the death of Robespierre's enemies, but which he wished to be decreed by the Convention. Saint-Just alluded to the jealousy of some members of the Convention against another member as the exciting cause of the disturbances felt by the government. He spoke of the abysses into which certain persons would precipitate the republic, the perils to which his own frankness exposed him, the courage requisite to brave them, and the little regret he should feel at quitting a world in which it was necessary to be the silent witness and accomplice of evil. He defended himself from the suspicion of flattering Robespierre, and declared that he only sided with him because his was the party of virtue.

"Collot and Billaud," said he, "have for some time past taken little share in our discussions, and appear intent on their own private projects. Billaud only speaks or remains silent as he is swayed by his hatred against those men whose destruction he earnestly desires. He closes his eyes and affects to sleep, and agitation has taken the place of this taciturnity for the last few days. He hesitates, becomes irritated, and recalls what he has said. He terms a man when he is absent Pisistratus; when he is present, his friend. He is silent, pale, and careworn. Truth has no share in his policy. Pride," added he, "alone gives birth to faction, and it is by faction that governments perish. If virtue did not sometimes wield the thunder, reason would succumb to force. Virtue is only recognised after its death, and a century elapsed before mankind wept over the tombs of the Gracchi and Sidney. 'Renown is but an empty sound,'" added he. "Listen to past ages,— you will hear nothing; and those who in future ages shall wander by our funeral urns will hear nothing more.

"If you do not resume your empire over faction, if you do not concentrate in yourselves the supreme power, we must quit a world where innocence no longer finds security in cities. We must fly to the deserts to find freedom and friends amongst wild beasts. We must leave a land in which men no longer possess the energy of crime or virtue!

"When I returned the last time from the armies I no longer recognised the faces of those I had known, whilst the deliberations of the committees were assigned to two or three men. As I could not approve of evil, I explained myself to the committees. 'Citizens!' I said, 'I feel a sinister presentiment, all is hidden from me; but I will watch, and everything that does not appear to me to be pure affection for the people and the republic shall incur my hate.' I announced, that if I undertook the report they wished to charge me with I should go to the source. Collot and Billaud insinuated that in this report I should not allude to the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul; they had reconsidered these ideas and blushed at the Divinity." After different indirect, yet strong allusions to the enemies of Robespierre, Saint-Just concluded: "The man severed by the most unjust treatment from the committees now justifies himself to you. He does not, it is true, explain himself clearly; but the bitterness of his feelings must in some measure excuse him. He is termed the tyrant of opinion, and his eloquence is imputed to him as a crime. What exclusive right do you possess over opinion, — you who find tyranny in the art of convincing and touching the hearts of men? What prevents you from disputing the esteem of the country, — you who are indignant that it should be won? Can there be a more innocent or a more disinterested triumph? Cato would have driven from Rome the unworthy citizen who used similar language. Thus jealous mediocrity would fain lead genius to the scaffold. Yet did you ever behold orators whilst kings swayed the sceptre? No! silence reigns around thrones. Persuasion is the soul of free nations. Slay the most eloquent, and you will soon have to crown the most envious. Robespierre did not sufficiently explain himself yesterday. A plan had been formed of usurping power by putting several members of the committees to death. Billaud-Varennes and Collot are the guilty men. I do not content myself with naming them, but I accuse them. I desire that they may justify themselves, and learn more wisdom for the future."

It is plain that this speech insinuated death, though it did not command it. Saint-Just, following the example of his leader, only wished to display the sword, and point out the victims; for he relied on the terror and the servility of the

Convention to strike with the steel those it had already struck at by suspicion.

XV. Saint-Just was not destined to conclude his allusion. Scarcely had he mounted the tribune and uttered a few words, than Tallien, unable to restrain his impatience, rose and demanded to be heard.

Collot-d'Herbois, who feared the ascendency of Saint-Just, hastened to comply with his demand.

"Citizens!" said Tallien, "Saint-Just has told you he belongs to no faction: I tell you the same; and it is for this reason that I utter the language of truth. But yesterday a member of the government severed himself from it, and made a speech in his own name; to-day a fresh example occurs. By these means the misfortunes of the country are aggravated, and it is precipitated into the abyss. I demand that the veil be entirely rent asunder."

Loud and prolonged applause told Tallien that his anger found an echo in the Convention.

Billaud-Varennes rose, bearing a more pale and gloomy expression than usual. "Yesterday," said he, in a voice tremulous with indignation, "the meeting of the Jacobins was filled with satellites, and the intention of massacring the Convention was openly declared."

A cry of horror interrupted Billaud, when, pointing towards La Montagne, he exclaimed: "I behold on La Montagne one of those men who threatened the representatives of the people." "Arrest him! arrest him!" was the cry; and the *huissiers* seized him, and dragged him out of the chamber.

"The time has arrived to reveal the whole truth," continued Billaud. "After what has occurred, I am surprised to see Saint-Just in the tribune. He had promised the committees to show them his report. The Assembly will not conceal from itself that it is between two perils, and that if it be irresolute all is lost."

"No, no," exclaimed all the deputies, rising and waving their hats in the air, and uttering cries of "*Vive la Convention! Vive la Comité de Salut Public!*"

"And I also," continued Billaud, "demand that all the members should explain themselves in this assembly. A man is strongly armed when he has on his side justice, truth, and the rights of the people. You will shudder when you learn the situation in which you are placed,—when you learn that the command of the armed force is intrusted to parricide hands, and that Henriot has been denounced to the committee as the accomplice of the conspirators. You will shudder when you know that there is a man here, (he glanced as he spoke at Robespierre,) who, when it was proposed to send the representatives of the people into the departments, could not find twenty members of the Convention who were in his eyes worthy of being intrusted with this mission." At these words a murmur of indignation ran through the assembly.

"When Robespierre told you that he separated himself from the committee because he was oppressed," continued Billaud, "he carefully concealed the real facts from you. He did not tell you it was because, after having for six months ruled the committee, he encountered resistance at the moment when he wished to carry into effect the decree of the 22nd Prairial; this decree, which, placed in the hands of the men he had selected, might have been fatal to the patriots."

An outbreak of terror and indignation again interrupted Billaud. "Yes," continued he, "know that the president of the Revolutionary Tribunal proposed openly yesterday at the Jacobins, to expel from the Convention the members marked for destruction. But the people is there." "Yes, yes," exclaimed the spectators in the tribunes, placed there by Tallien. "The patriots will die to save the representatives. I repeat it, we will all die first. There is not a single representative who would live under the yoke of a tyrant." "No; death to tyrants!" was the reply.

Billaud proceeded: "The men who unceasingly speak of justice and virtue, are the first to trample them beneath their feet. I demanded the arrest of a secretary of the Committee of Public Safety who had robbed the nation, and Robespierre was the only one who protected him." New clamours burst forth against the alleged protector of theft.

"And it is he who accuses us," cried Billaud. "What! men who belong to no party, who pass their days and nights at the committees, who ensure victory by their forethought,"—(here all eyes were turned towards Carnot,)—"are called conspirators! Those, then, who abandoned Hébert, when it was no longer possible to support him, are doubtless virtuous citizens!

"When I denounced Danton for the first time," added the speaker, "Robespierre flew into the most violent rage, saying, I wished to destroy the best patriots."

La Montagne and the former friends of Danton appeared astonished at this exculpation of Robespierre from the mouth of his accuser.

"But the gulph yawns at your feet: we must fill it with our bodies or else precipitate the traitors into it." Loud and prolonged applause followed Billaud to his seat.

XVI. Robespierre, pale and excited, ascended the tribune amidst cries of "*A bas le tyran!*" from La Montagne; when Tallien, pushing him aside, spoke amidst a dead silence. "Just now I demanded that the curtain should be withdrawn; it is so: the conspirators are unmasked, and liberty will triumph. Up to this moment I had preserved utter silence, because I was aware that the tyrant had made a list of proscriptions. But I was present at the sittings of the Jacobins. I beheld the formation of the army of this second Cromwell, and I armed myself with this poignard, with which to pierce his heart, if the National Convention had not the courage to order his arrest."

With these words Tallien drew a dagger from beneath his coat, and held it to Robespierre's breast: the latter receded, but did not abandon the tribune to his rival.

"But we republicans," continued Tallien, "we accuse him openly before the French nation. No, although such is the hope of his partisans, there will be no 31st of May; no proscription. National justice alone will punish the guilty.

"I demand that Henriot be arrested, that he may not urge his troops to any overt act against the Convention, and that we also reconsider the decree of the 22nd Prairial, which we passed at the motion of the man who occupies our attention." Tallien seemed unwilling to pronounce the name of Robespierre. "We are not *modérés*," continued he; "but we do not wish to confound the innocent with the guilty. But yesterday an old representative of the people was insulted. I call on all the friends of liberty, on all the ancient Jacobins and the republican journalists, to aid us in saving liberty. I should have gone boldly to the scaffold, because I felt that the day would come when my ashes would be collected with the honours due to a patriot slain by a tyrant. The man who is now by my side is a new Catiline, and his followers new Verres. Robespierre wished to isolate and attack us one after another, in order to remain with the degraded and vicious creatures with whom he associates. I demand that we sit permanently until the sword of the law has assured the safety of the republic, and destroyed his satellites."

XVII. Tallien's motion was carried without a dissenting voice. Billaud-Varennes added to the list of those whose arrest was ordered, the name of Dumas, vice-president of the Revolutionary Tribunal; and Delmas all the staff of Henriot. Robespierre again endeavoured to be heard, but his voice was drowned by cries of "*A bas le tyran!*" and calls for Barrère, who ascended the tribunal. "Attempts are made," said he, "to excite the people and seize on the national power, under favour of a prearranged crisis. Until we refute the statements of Robespierre, we propose measures which public tranquillity requires. These measures are the suppression of the commander of the armed force and his staff." Barrère proposed to announce this by a proclamation. "Citizens," this proclamation began, "liberty is lost, if we weigh a few men against the country; the revolutionary government is attacked; and if you do not rally around the national representatives, the people will be exposed to the utmost vengeance of tyrants."

The opinion of Barrère decided all who had hitherto hesitated, and the proclamation was adopted. Robespierre remained motionless at the tribune, his arms folded, his lips contracted, and his features working with excitement, whilst the expression of his face changed from impatience to resignation, from indignation to contempt.

The aged Vadier, the president of the Committee of Safety, next ascended the tribune. "Until the 22nd Prairial," said he, "my eyes were not opened to the real character of this crafty personage, who has worn every mask, and who, when he could no longer shield his creatures, himself sent them to the scaffold. Every one knows he openly defended Bazire, Chabot, Camille Desmoulins, and Danton; the tyrant—

such is the name I give him—wished to divide the two committees. Do you know why he had principally marked me? Because I had drawn up a report that displeased him. Beneath the mattress of the mother of God, Catherine Théos, there was a letter addressed to Robespierre, announcing that his mission was foretold, and that he would establish a religion without priests, and be the pontiff of a new faith."

Robespierre shrugged his shoulders, and Vadier continued:—"According to himself he is the only defender of liberty. His eternal note is, *I am oppressed,—I cannot obtain a hearing;* and yet he is the only one who speaks, and every word is an order. He says such a one conspires against me, therefore he conspires against the republic. Every deputy is followed by his spies; and I was pursued to the very table where I dined."

Vadier prolonged this portrait too much: reflection might avert the blow. Tallien felt this, and exclaimed,—"I demand this discussion be brought back to the real question."

"I will bring it back myself," cried Robespierre, advancing, but his voice was again drowned amidst the clamours of the Montagne: and Tallien again spoke:—"Let us abandon these individual accusations," said he; "there is not one of us who could not lay some act of tyranny to his charge; but it is to the speech he made yesterday at the Jacobins I direct you, for it is there that the tyrant unmasks himself; there that I wish to strike at him. This man, who vaunts his virtue and patriotism at the epoch of the 10th of August, did not appear until three days after the Revolution,—this man, who should have been the defender of the oppressed in the committees, has abandoned them for six weeks, to return and calumniate them at the moment when they saved the country; and if I wished to retrace all the acts of oppression which have taken place, I could prove they happened during the time Robespierre was at the head of the police."

Robespierre rushed forward. "It is false," exclaimed he, stretching forth his hand; "I——" The tumult again prevented him from being heard, and deprived him even of his courage. More irritated at the injustice of his foes than alarmed at their number, he quitted the tribune, ascended the steps of La Montagne, and rushing amongst his former friends, appealed to them, reproached them with their defection, entreating them to give him a hearing. They all turned away their heads. "Withdraw from those benches, where the shades of Danton and Camille Desmoulins repulse thee," exclaimed the Montagnards. "Is it Danton, then, you would avenge?" asked Robespierre, as though overcome by astonishment and remorse. The benches falling was the only reply of the Montagnards. He descended again to the centre, and addressing the reliques of the Girondists with suppliant air, he said, "Well, it is from you, pure men, that I demand asylum, and not from these wretches;" and he pointed to Fouché, Bourdon, Legendre, &c., as he seated himself on an unoccupied bench. "Wretch," exclaimed the Girondists, "that was Vergniaud's seat!" At the name of Vergniaud, Robespierre arose, and went away hurriedly.

Rejected by all parties, he again took refuge in the tribune, and addressing the president in an angry tone, cried, in a voice which failed him, for the last time, "President of assassins! will you hear me?" "In your turn," answered Thuriot, to whom Collot d'Herbois had resigned the chair. "No! no! no!" shouted the conspirators, resolved to strike without a hearing. The tumult overwhelmed him,— nothing could be heard but the uproar of voices, nor seen but gestures, alternately threatening and suppliant. Robespierre's voice became hoarser, and finally extinct. "Danton's blood stifles thee," shouted Garnier de l'Aube, the friend and fellow-countryman of Danton. This was the finishing blow for Robespierre.

The hitherto unheard voice of an obscure representative, named Louchet, at last uttered the words on every lip, but which none had dared to pronounce. "I demand," exclaimed Louchet, "the arrest of Robespierre."

XVIII. So momentous a resolution, the danger from without, long respect, for a moment paralysed the Convention. It appeared as though they were about assailing, in the person of Robespierre, the majesty and divinity of the people. Silence precedes explosion. The Assembly hesitated. The conspirators felt the danger. Some hands on the benches of

La Montagne gave the signal for applauding the proposal of Louchet. These applauses were prolonged and increased, until they burst forth into general applause.

At this moment a young man arose, in spite of the efforts of his colleagues to keep him down. It was young Robespierre, innocent, esteemed, pure from crimes and the tyranny reproached to his blood. "I am as guilty as my brother," he said, with a look which disdained entreaty and refused indulgence; "I have shared his virtues, I will share his fate." Some exclamations of admiration and pity responded to this fraternal devotion. The mass, indifferent or impatient, accepted the sacrifice without even honouring it with attention.

Robespierre endeavoured again to speak, not for himself, but for his brother: "I accept my condemnation: I have deserved your hatred; but, crime or virtue, he is not guilty of that which you strike in me." A noise of trampling of feet and sullen murmurs replied to him. In vain did he turn, now towards the president, now to La Montagne, now to La Plaine, to obtain the right of defending his brother. They were afraid of his voice, mistrusted all emotion, and shrunk from the voice of nature. "President," cried Duval, "shall it be said that one man is master of the Convention?" "He has been so too long!" shouted another. "Oh, how difficult it is to strike down a tyrant!" shouted Fréron, moving his arm as if he were driving an axe into the trunk of a tree. This phrase seemed to root out Robespierre from the tribune, and thrust him forth from the Convention. "Divide — divide! arrest — arrest!" This general exclamation appeared to overcome the feigned forbearance of the president. The arrest was voted unanimously. All the members rose, and cried "*Vive la Republique!*" "The republic!" exclaimed Robespierre, ironically, "it is destroyed, for scoundrels triumph;" and he descended from the tribune with folded arms.

Lebas, seated beside young Robespierre, rose also, and nobly stood apart from the proscribers of his friend: "I will not share the opprobrium of this decree: I demand the arrest of myself." The sentence of death Lebas asked was accorded to him; and he was included in the warrant of arrest of the two Robespierres, Couthon, and Saint-Just. Barrère, the impassive and mechanical instrument of the Convention, drew up in haste the warrants against his colleagues of the previous evening.

Whilst Barrère was writing, "Citizens!" exclaimed Fréron, in order that the anger of the Convention might not doze, "it is now that the country and liberty will come forth from their ruins! There has been an attempt to form a triumvirate, which would have recalled the proscriptions of Sylla! These triumvirs, Robespierre, Couthon, and Saint-Just would have made of our bodies so many steps for mounting to the throne!" "I aspire to a throne!" replied Couthon, with melancholy irony, raising the cloak which covered his knees, and pointing to his powerless legs. Collot reassumed the president's chair. "Citizens," said he, "you have just saved the country. The country, rent to pieces, has not appealed to you in vain. They say that it was necessary to renew against you a 31st of May!" "You have lied!" cried Robespierre, from the foot of the tribune. At this the Convention affected to be insulted; and the shouts from La Montagne redoubled. They insisted on having the accused placed at the bar. Robespierre advanced towards it like a combatant still heated by his struggle; Saint-Just, like a disciple, proud of sharing his master's fate; Couthon, like a victim already mutilated; the two others, like innocent men, who voluntarily accept the penalty of their crime that they may not disavow their doctrines and their friends. There, mute and degraded from their rank of representatives, they forced them to hear, beneath the gaze of the tribunes, lengthened declamations of Collot d'Herbois, and the congratulations which their fall extracted from their adulators of the previous evenings. At three o'clock the sitting adjourned, and *gens d'armes* led the accused across the Place de Carrousel to the Hôtel de Brionne, where the Committee of General Safety was sitting. A crowd of deputies and lookers on crowded round to gaze on this last sport of fortune. The two Robespierres, arm-in-arm, in token of their individual attachment in life or death, walked foremost. Saint-Just and Lebas followed, calm and sorrowful. Two *gens d'armes* carried Couthon in an armchair. Sarcasms, shouts of laughter, and maledictions followed them.

XIX. At the same moment, a procession of carts, containing forty-five victims, left the court-yard of the palace, and was advancing towards the Rue Saint Antoine to the scaffold. Some friends of the condemned, and some generous citizens, learning that the Convention was at issue, and believing that mercy would spring from tyranny destroyed, rushed after the carts, with cries of "*Pardon*," re-echoed by the people. Henriot, for whom the continuation of the terror was the sign of power, mounted on horseback, with a troop of satellites, dispersed the compassionate citizens with strokes of the sabre, and the executions were completed.

The previous evening, sixty-two heads had fallen between Robespierre's first harangue and his fall. Of this number was that of Roucher, author of *Les Mois* (the Months), those French *Fasti;* and that of the young poet, André Chénier, then the hope, and afterwards the everlasting regret, of French poesy. These two poets were seated side by side on the same bench, their hands fastened behind their backs. They conversed serenely of another world, disdainfully of that they were leaving: they turned away their eyes from the troop of slaves, and recited verses as immortal as their memories. They evinced the firmness of Socrates. André Chénier, when on the scaffold, striking his head against one of the posts of the guillotine, said, "It is a pity, for I had something *here*." Sole, but touching reproach to destiny, which complains not of life, but of genius, cut off before its time. The punishment completed, Henriot, returned with slow steps and as a conqueror, through the faubourg. France, like the crazed Ophelia of Shakspeare, tore from her brow and cast into the blood at her feet the brightest ornaments of her crown.

## BOOK LXI.

I. The moment was dangerous and critical, the two government committees had remained at the Tuileries during the suspension of the sitting of the Convention; this suspension was a great risk to the Convention, whose only strength consisted in itself. To bestow one minute on reflection was to permit the return of tyranny. Courage in a political body is merely a paroxysm of feeling, and the conspirators against Robespierre, uneasy at the caprices and irresolute counsels of an assembly whose strength was quite exhausted, preferred the danger of acting alone, to that of counselling the Convention upon every measure that might seem to require it.

After undergoing a short examination before the Committee of General Safety, Robespierre had been sent to the Luxembourg, his brother to St. Lazare, Saint-Just to the Ecossais, Lebas to La Force, and Couthon to la Bourbe. Small escorts of *gens d'armes* were sent to convey the prisoners to their respective destinations; but at no prison was the accused individual received within the walls.

It is pretended that the gaolers were so awe-struck at hearing the distinguished names of those consigned to their care, that they could not be prevailed upon to thrust those into a dungeon who the day before had been their rulers and masters. But the cell which had contained Danton might also receive Robespierre; and if even the name of that person caused the gaoler of the Luxembourg to hesitate in the discharge of his duty, those of Robespierre the younger, Lébas, Saint-Just, and Couthon, possessed not the same prestige; and how came it to pass that the gaolers of so many different prisons, situated at the opposite extremities of Paris, who perilled their lives by acting in disobedience to the orders of the committee, should simultaneously be seized with the same profound respect at the sight of prisoners differing so much from one another? The secret of this mystery is to be found in the rash yet crafty policy of those who directed the whole affair. Men of that day assert that the committee, influenced by the suggestions of fear and hatred, foresaw that the Revolutionary Tribunal, devoted to Robespierre, would be sure to declare him and his associates innocent of the charges laid to them. To change the Revolutionary Tribunal was a measure not to be hastily accomplished; and even if that body were entirely altered, the affair would still be long and terrible. Again, the people, assembled for days in dense masses around the tribunal, would not permit the great accused to be torn from them. There was an entire absence of any serious cause of complaint or real charge against Robespierre, and were he to return to the Convention exonerated from blame, and declared innocent, he would, like Marat, resume his place in that assembly, not as a person acquitted of an alleged offence, but as an accuser himself. These reasons determined the Thermidorians to proceed: two things were essentially required to effect their purpose — promptitude of action and apparent guilt on the part of Robespierre, who, having been driven by them to the very verge of crime, must now be precipitated into its vortex, at least in the eyes of the national representation, so as to ascribe the speedy and unavoidable sacrifice of the tyrant of the Convention to the discovery of a plot attempted by him to cause an insurrection of the people.

Thus, then, while the committees sent the accused in separate parties, and in open day, through the most frequented parts of Paris to their respective prisons, trusty emissaries were despatched to the gaolers of the several prisons carrying private and verbal directions not to receive the prisoners when brought. Driven back from the gates of their prison, vast crowds would collect around them and form a sort of triumphal procession — their apparent disobedience would constitute a crime against the laws; and thus a snare was laid for them in the form of sedition; and however dangerous might be an insurrection of the people, it was less so in the eyes of Robespierre's enemies than the fluctuations of the Convention or the condemnation and execution of Robespierre himself. Such are the accounts of greyheaded men who were either actors in or spectators of the above affair, and it is not to be dismissed as untrue spite of its apparent improbability. But, on the other hand, it is equally possible the agents of Robespierre's party might have got away from the Convention at the instant the order for his arrest was given, and hastening to the different gaolers intimidated them to refuse admission to their approaching captives. Perhaps both versions may be correct; but however that may be, it is certain that the event fully justified the deep design and bold daring of its projectors. Rejected at the threshold of his prison, each condemned individual was quickly snatched from the hands of the *gens d'armes* who escorted him, surrounded by a group of Jacobins, and conducted in triumph to the Commune. Payan and Coffinhal had on their side sent out masses of people to overtake the accused and to deliver them. The same idea, though with a different intention, issued forth at the same instant from both the Hôtel de Ville and the Committee of Public Safety, — the one desirous of bestowing a leader, the other of creating a pretext for an insurrection.

II. Nevertheless, the insurrection was far from being a harmless sport for the enemies of Robespierre. It was imminently perilous, and had been organised from the beginning of the day by a part of the people of Paris, and awaited but the signal to break forth. Its focus was in the Hôtel de Ville. Fleuriot, Payan, Dobsent, Coffinhal, and Henriot had remained sitting there in consultation ever since the morning; while the Jacobins were similarly occupied under the presidency of Vivier. The Commune had received regular intimation, by means of its emissaries, of all that was going forwards in the Convention, and, at the first intimation of the downfal of Robespierre, had appointed a Committee of Execution, composed of twelve members, each of whom was sent off to harangue, instigate, and arm the various divisions; while the open space before the Hôtel de Ville displayed a dense mass of glittering bayonets. Henriot's cannoneers, with their pieces, aided by the national *gend'armerie*, administered on the spot the oath to free the Convention from its oppressors. From a few of the elevated towers at the extremity of Paris the tocsin sent forth its monitory sounds. The *rappel* was beat in all the most populous streets of the quartier St. Antoine and St. Marçeau; and the *Garde Nationale*, accustomed to the triumphs of the Commune, flocked from all parts to their posts. The quays, the bridges, all the approaches to the Hôtel de Ville, presented only the appearance of one immense camp. The neighbourhood of the Tuileries, on the contrary, was silent, quiet, and deserted, as though some contagious malady lurked within its precincts. The population of the faubourgs flocked in formidable crowds at the summons of Henriot's aides-de-camp and the call of Coffinhal's emissaries. Every thing conspired to assure the avengers of Robespierre of entire success. They already arrogated to themselves all the airs of conquerors. A messenger from the Convention, presenting himself before the

Commune, to announce the order for arresting Henriot, and for citing Payan and Fleuriot to appear at the bar, was hissed, hooted, insulted, and even struck upon the great staircase; and when the same individual requested a receipt for the safe delivery of the order — "Tell those who sent you," replied Fleuriot (the mayor), that on such a day as the present, we give no receipts; and bid Robespierre be of good courage, for he has the people at his back." "And say also to those villains who dare insult that great citizen," added Henriot, with a brutal oath, "that we are now in consultation upon the best means of exterminating them."

The arrest of Robespierre, announced a few minutes afterwards, by some confederates who had contrived to get away from the tribunes, increased the excitement of the Commune almost to frenzy. Henriot, drawing his sword from its scabbard, swore to bring back the scoundrels that had dared to lay their sacrilegious hands on the idol of the people, fastened to his horse's tail. Standing in the front salle of the Hôtel de Ville, before a table covered with bottles, and surrounded by his aides-de-camp, Henriot seemed to seek counsel in intoxication, and courage in imprecations. During these orgies of the commandant-general, the mayor addressed the Council in glowing terms upon the subject of the insurrection, without, however, unveiling its full extent. Payan drew up an address, in which he denounced to the people the oppressors of the most virtuous of patriots, Robespierre; of Saint-Just, the apostle of virtue; and of Couthon, "*who*," pursued Payan, "*possesses only a living heart and head; the flame of patriotism having already consumed his body.*"

III. These preliminaries being gone through, Henriot, pistol in hand, sprung on his horse, gallopped off to the Luxembourg, and brought back with him a party of *gens d'armes*, with whom he traversed the Rue St. Honoré, where, meeting Merlin de Thionville in the crowd, he seized him, insulted him, and committed him to the guard-house. Arrived at the gate of the Carrousel, Henriot wished to pass through, but was prevented by the soldiers of the Convention, who, although few in number, crossed their bayonets before his horse's breast, and refused to admit him. The noise brought out an officer of the Convention, who, upon perceiving the cause, immediately called out to the *gens d'armes*, "Arrest this rebel!—there is an order just issued, commanding you to do so." The men yielded prompt obedience to the voice of the law, seized the general, pulled him from his horse, bound him with their own belts, and threw him, dead drunk, into one of the rooms belonging to the Committee of Public Safety.

IV. While Henriot thus fell at the very doors of the Convention, Saint-Just, Lebas, and Couthon were brought back by their liberators in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville. The municipal council called loudly for Robespierre, public rumour having spread the news of his having been refused admission to the prison of the Luxembourg; and it was even questioned whether the scoundrels of the Convention had not murdered the virtuous citizen in the very act of yielding obedience to the law. At that time the cause of his absence was unknown. Fleuriot, Payan, and Coffinhal soon reassured the council upon this point, and added to the enthusiasm already existing, by calling forth their admiration and sympathy for such self-denial as their idol had evinced. The facts were these:—

Robespierre was resolved to die or triumph, at least seemingly pure of all share in the insurrection. When surrounded by a crowd of partisans at the gates of the Luxembourg, and implored to put himself at the head of the people to punish the Convention, he had persisted in remaining in the hands of his *gens d'armes*, and had caused himself to be conducted, still under their charge, to the depôt of the Municipalité, now occupied by the prefecture of police, and, while there, neither the entreaties of the Jacobins, nor the frequent and earnest messages of Fleuriot and Payan could induce him to break through the order for his arrest. Made prisoner by command of his enemies, he resolved either to triumph or fall submissive to the law only—added to which, he firmly believed the Revolutionary Tribunal would acquit him of all laid to his charge, or, if not, and if even condemned to death, "the death of one just man," said he, "is less hurtful to the republic than the example of a revolt against the national representation."

Robespierre remained thus in voluntary confinement at the prefecture of police for three whole hours, and only yielded at last to the patriotic violence of Coffinhal, who dispersed his *gens d'armes*, carried him out of his prison, and bore him, in his arms, to the salle of General Council, in the Hôtel de Ville. "If what I do be a crime," said Coffinhal, "be that crime mine, but should glory result from it, then may that glory and the safety of the people be ascribed to you alone. Scruples are made for the wicked, virtue can never need them. In saving you, I save the liberty of our country — dare you refuse so noble a work ?"

V. But just as Robespierre, carried, rather than led by Coffinhal, entered the salle of the General Council, and while half suffocated by the affectionate embraces of his brother, Saint-Just, Lebas, and Couthon, news was brought of the arrest of Henriot. Coffinhal, without a moment's delay, returned to the square, harangued several bodies of malcontents whom he found there, induced them to follow him, armed himself with a gun having a bayonet, and then marched at the head of this column to the Committee of Public Safety ; arrived there, he darted, still carrying his weapon in his hand, into all the inner and outer passages of the Tuileries, where the Committee was then sitting ; there he found Henriot sleeping off the effects of his potations. Freeing him from all restraint, he assisted him to remount his horse, still tied to the gate of the Place Carrousel, and brought him back to his soldiers. Henriot, now fully aroused, encouraged, set free, and burning to avenge his late disgrace, rushed to his batteries, and turned his pieces against the Convention.

VI. It was now seven o'clock in the evening, and the dispersed deputies reassembled to resume their consultations : fear and consternation were painted on every face as they conversed together in low mysterious whispers, upon the gloomy prospects presented by the accounts received from all parts during their hour's cessation from business ; they spoke of the oath taken by the Jacobins to die or triumph with Robespierre — the escape of the prisoners — the rapidly increasing torrent of sedition that bid fair to overwhelm them from the fauxbourgs — the distant sound of the tocsin — the sections rallying round the Commune — the cannon pointed against the Tuileries — the blank left around the Convention — the boldness of the people in daring to contend against those who were armed with the whole power of the law; the approach of 3000 young students of the nation, the pretorians of Robespierre, hurrying to the Champ de Mars at the call of Labretêche and de Souberbielle, to inaugurate the reign of the new Marius by deeds of blood. The timid magnified the danger, the wavering exaggerated it, while those whose courage gave way before so many threatening dangers, merely waited to learn the state of affairs, and then withdrew as quickly as possible. The members of the Committee, driven from their usual place of deliberation by the invasion of Coffinhal, and informed of the presence of Henriot in the Carrousel, pursued their consultation, standing in a small chamber adjoining the Hall of Public Meetings: the whole strength of the committee rested solely on themselves; the safety of the Convention depended entirely upon their decision—a word might destroy it—a gesture save it.

The Convention, at this eventful moment, elevated itself to the greatness of its danger, and did not despair of the safety of the national representation, even in sight of the cannon pointed against the very seat of legislation.

Bourdon de l'Oise mounted the tribune, and all private conversation ceased; he announced that the Jacobins had just received a deputation from the Commune, and had associated themselves with the insurgents; he recommended the Convention to enter into a similar bond of fraternity with the people of Paris, and by this demonstration of brotherly regard to calm down the excitement of the citizens. in the same manner as was done on the 31st of May. Merlin next recounted his arrest by the satellites of Henriot, and his deliverance by the *gens d'armes*, while Legendre, who seemed to regain his youthful energy and spirit from the very desperation of the circumstances in which he was placed, as well as from the absence of Robespierre, set to work to infuse a portion of his own recovered firmness into the minds of the timid, when a violent noise from without interrupted his discourse.

The disturbance arose from Henriot's commanding his artillerymen to break open the doors. Billaud-Varennes forbade the attempt being made, and several of the deputies rushed out of the salle. Collot d'Herbois sprung into the president's chair, as his proper post. This seat, placed just opposite the door, must have received the first shots fired. "Citizens!" cried Collot, putting on his hat and sitting down, "now is the moment to die at our posts!" "And there will we die!" exclaimed the whole assembly, with one simultaneous burst, as they placed themselves in their seats to await the blow.

The citizens in the tribunes, struck with admiration at so much self-possession, swore to defend the Convention; rushing out in numbers, they dispersed themselves in the gardens, the courts, and the adjacent neighbourhood, shouting, "To arms!"

The Convention issued a decree against Henriot that went even beyond the power of the law. Amar went forth, escorted by his intrepid colleagues, and addressing the troops, said, "Soldiers! will you who have ever deserved so much from your country, cast shame and dishonour on her now? Look at that drunken man! who but a drunkard would ever point his arms against his country or its representatives?"

VII. The soldiers touched by these words, as well as intimidated by the severity of the decree, refused to obey their leader any longer. Henriot feeling himself partly deserted, with some difficulty persuaded his men to follow him to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. The daring Barras was appointed commandant of the National Guard, as well as of all the forces of the Convention, in his place. With Barras were joined Fréron, Léonard Bourdon, Legendre, Goupileau de Fontenay, Bourdon de l'Oise,—all clever decided men; twelve commissioners were also elected to fraternise with the various bodies of opposite principles, enlighten the public mind, and induce the National Guard to rally round the Convention.

VIII. Night had now enveloped in its shades the fluctuating mass that flocked to and fro between the Hôtel de Ville and the Tuileries. Barras, and the military deputies by whom he was accompanied, traversed the various quartiers of the centre of Paris on horseback, and by the light of torches, loudly calling on the citizens to come forward to the assistance of the representation, against a set of factious, dangerous men — an army, or rather a handful of devoted men, composed of citizens from every section — *gens d'armes* — and some of Henriot's own artillerymen rallied around the Convention to the number of 1800 men. Barras, while waiting for the coming day, might, had he so pleased, have increased the amount of his band; but he was too well aware of the value of time, and the powerful effect of boldness, to waste his minutes in that which he deemed of secondary consideration. Quick as thought, he sketched out his plan, which he executed with equal promptitude. He caused the Hôtel de Ville to be silently surrounded by some detachments, brought stealthily through all the bye-streets, thus cutting off all succour or means of retreat from the insurgents. Barras himself, with his artillery in advance, proceeded slowly along the quays towards the Hôtel de Ville, and Léonard Bourdon following with another column down the narrow streets, parallel with the quay, advanced at the same pace, and emerged from another side of the opposite extremity of the Place de Grêve. In proportion as Barras and Bourdon drew near the Place de Grêve, the body of voices around the Hôtel de Ville appeared to diminish, and the tumult died entirely away at their approach. The night was in their favour; and now, fully reassured by the unfrequented state of the quays, Barras caused his men to come to a halt, while he returned to the Convention, at full gallop, entered the salle, mounted the tribune — his martial countenance, his arms, his words, inspiring hope and confidence in all present. The Convention tranquillised, Barras again mounted his horse, amid cries of "Vive la Republique!" "Vive the preserver of the Convention!"

IX. Robespierre, however, at the Commune, still persisted in the impassibility he had assumed. Coffinhal, Fleuriot, Payan, alone sustained the energy of the Council and the devotion of the people, although none of them had sufficient popularity to give his name to so great a movement, and Robespierre refused his name. "Oh if I were but Robespierre!" exclaimed Coffinhal, as he left the Hôtel de Ville, when Robespierre replied to all persuasions, "You destroy me, you destroy yourselves, you destroy the republic." They urged him to accept the dictatorship; but he exclaimed, "No, no: I will not give an example of the national representation enslaved by a citizen." "Then," said Couthon, "we have but to die." "You have said it," replied Robespierre, calmly resolved to be immolated as a victim rather than triumph as a rebel. "Well, it is you who sacrifice us," said Saint-Just, with his eyes fixed on a sheet of paper, on which had been drawn up a call to insurrection by one of the council. Robespierre, importuned by his colleagues, had half signed his name at the bottom, then, suddenly arrested by his scruples and indecision, and leaving the signature unfinished, he had cast down the pen, and thrust the paper from him. This act, which destroyed his friends, did not, however, degrade Robespierre in their eyes. The crowds then left the tribunes, fearful of contact with the Convention; and the night was lost amid wavering counsels. The clock at the Hôtel de Ville struck two.

Tallien, taking the president's chair, replied, in loud and energetic tone to Fréron and his companions; "Go!" cried he, "and let not to-morrow's sun shine in the heavens ere those traitors' heads have been struck from their shoulders."

X. At the same instant, the troops led by Léonard Bourdon that had been noiselessly stealing along the side streets of the Quais halted ere they turned into the Place de Grêve, as the cry of "*Vive la Convention!*" reached their ear. In vain did Henriot, sword in hand, gallop like a madman into the midst of the crowd, overthrowing and trampling several under his horse's feet, reply to the cry by that of "*Vive la Commune!*" The universal contempt felt for him, the wildness of his conduct, the disorder of his look and manner, the blocked up streets, added to the expected arrival of the fresh forces, all combined to cast discouragement among the sectionists. The artillerymen overwhelmed their brutal general with hisses and hootings; then turning the mouths of their cannon against the Hôtel de Ville, they made the places and quays resound with one vehement burst of "*Vive la Convention!*" then quickly dispersed.

The column of men commanded by Barras stopped as the shout burst forth to allow of the crowd's departing, and ere many minutes had elapsed the whole of that immense mass of living beings had either retired to their homes, or had ranged themselves beneath the banners of Barras.

A profound silence reigned around the Hôtel de Ville, and in the opinion of Léonard Bourdon this quietude indicated some snare on the part of those within the building whom he conjectured to have fortified themselves in the Salle with the intention of blowing up the edifice, and burying themselves and their opponents in the ruins. A mutual terror kept the Place de Grève long empty, and prevented any closer contact between the besiegers and the besieged. All at once the report of fire-arms was heard within; cries of horror and heavy noises followed. As the sounds escaped from the windows, Dulac, a courageous and resolute agent of the Committee of Public Safety, at the head of five-and-twenty sappers, and a party of grenadiers, crossed the square, beat in the doors with hatchets, and ascended the grand staircase, pointing their bayonets before them as they went.

XI. At the sound of approaching footsteps, Lebas, armed with a brace of pistols, had presented one to Robespierre, conjuring him to put a period to his existence; but Robespierre, in conjunction with Saint-Just and Couthon, refused to commit suicide, preferring to die by the hand of their enemies. Sitting mute and motionless around a table in the Salle de l'Egalité, they listened to the sound of persons ascending to their apartment, kept their eyes fixed on the door, and awaited their fate.

As the jingling noise proceeding from the arms carried by the advancing men became too distinct to be misunderstood, Lebas discharged a pistol through his heart, and fell dead in the arms of Robespierre the younger, who, although equally certain of his innocence, and of being acquitted, did not choose to survive his brother or his friend. Opening a window, he leaped out into the court, and broke his leg. Coffinhal, making the chambers and lobbies resound with his imprecations and hurried tread, chanced to encounter Henriot, stupified with terror and wine: bitterly reproaching him for his gross and cowardly conduct, he seized him in his arms, carried him towards an open window, and threw him from the second floor on to a heap of ordure. "Lie there, wretched drunkard," cried Coffinhal as he flung him down. "You are not worthy to die on a scaffold!"

Meanwhile, Dulac, satisfied as to the safety of the interior of the Maison Commune, had sent one of his grenadiers to apprise Bourdon's column of the free access afforded to every part of the Hôtel de Ville. Upon receiving this intelligence, Léonard Bourdon drew up his men in order of battle before the steps leading to the Hôtel de Ville; he then ascended himself, accompanied by five *gens d'armes* and a detachment of soldiers. Dulac having joined him, the whole party rushed eagerly towards the Salle de l'Egalité. The door soon yielded to the blows given by the soldiers with the butt-end of their muskets, amid the cries of "Down with the tyrant!" "Which is he?" inquired the soldiers; but Léonard Bourdon durst not meet the look of his fallen enemy. Standing a little behind the men, and hidden by the body of a *gen d'arme*, named *Méda;* with his right hand he seized the arm of the *gen d'arme* who held a pistol, and pointing with his left hand to the person to be aimed at, he directed the muzzle of the weapon towards Robespierre, exclaiming, "That is the man." The man fired, and the head of Robespierre dropped on the table, deluging with blood the proclamation he had not finished signing. The ball had entered the left side of his face, and carried away several of his teeth. Couthon, endeavouring to rise upon his withered limbs, staggered and fell under the table. Saint-Just remained sitting immoveable at the table, now gazing mournfully on Robespierre, now casting proud looks of defiance at his enemies.

XII. At the report of fire-arms, and the cry of "*Vive la Convention!*" the troops of Barras filled the place, scaled the Hôtel de Ville; and, taking possession of every outlet, seized upon Fleuriot, Payan, Duplay, and upwards of eighty members of the Commune, bound them, ranged them two and two in the Salle, and then prepared to march them off in triumph to the Convention. Coffinhal alone contrived, amid the general confusion, to make his escape, which he effected by bursting open a door that had been barricaded in one of the lower rooms; and thus regaining the open streets, fled for refuge to one of the boats moored on the Seine, for the use of washerwomen; but, being compelled by hunger to quit his retreat on the following day, was recognised and taken into custody.

In the mean time Barras, followed by his long file of prisoners, conducted his men back to the Convention. Day was just beginning to dawn, and discovered Robespierre carried on a litter by four *gens d'armes*, his face covered with a handkerchief steeped in blood: the persons who bore Couthon had let him fall and roll in the mud at the corner of the Place de Grève; when they thought proper to take him up, his clothes were soiled and torn, so as to leave a portion of his throat and breast quite uncovered. Robespierre the younger was conveyed in a state of utter insensibility in the arms of two men of the people. Next followed the corpse of Lebas, over which had hastily been flung a table-cover spotted with blood. Then came Saint-Just, bare-headed, and with downcast looks; his hands were tied behind him, and his countenance bespoke rather submission to his fate, than shame for having provoked it.

At five o'clock the head of the column of soldiers entered the Tuileries, where the Convention were awaiting the termination of the affair, without fear or apprehension as to its results. A loud murmuring noise proclaimed the approach of Barras and Fréron. Charlier was acting as president at the time. "The recreant Robespierre is there," cried he, pointing to the door; "shall he come in?" "No! no!" replied all the members, some from horror, others from pity: "to expose before the Convention the body of a man, loaded with every species of crime, would be to deprive this glorious day of its well-earned glory, — the corpse of a tyrant can carry nothing but contagion along with it. The only spot fit for Robespierre and his accomplices, is the *Place de la Revolution*."

Intoxicated with his triumph, Léonard Bourdon went into all the details of his expedition, and presented the *gen d'arme*, who had fired at Robespierre, to the notice of the Convention. Next entered Legendre, armed with a brace of pistols: he announced the fact of his having just dispersed the Jacobins, and locked the doors of their assembly-rooms with his own hand; in proof whereof he threw the keys on the tribune.

XIII. Robespierre meanwhile had been laid upon a table in the adjoining ante-room, his head supported by the back of a chair: a crowd of persons were continually flocking in to obtain, by means of clambering on stools and benches, a view of the fallen creature, once the idol and ruler of the republic. Some even among those who had favoured and cringed before him only the day previously, came to assure themselves he would never rise again. The wretched man was overwhelmed with expressions of contempt, invectives, and abuse. Nothing was spared him; the officers of the Convention pointed him out to the spectators in the same manner as a ferocious beast is exposed in a menagerie. The unhappy being feigned death to escape the insults and ignominy heaped upon him. A man in the employ of the Committee of Public Safety, who, while he rejoiced in the downfal of a tyrant, pitied the unfortunate creature thus at the mercy of his enemies, approached Robespierre, unfastened his garter, and, drawing down his stocking, placed his finger on the artery in his leg, whose full and regular pulsations announced the vital strength he still possessed. "Let him be searched!" exclaimed the crowd; and upon so doing, a brace of pistols, with the arms of France engraved on the case that contained them, were found in his pocket. "What a scoundrel!" cried the bystanders; "a proof of his aspiring to the throne may be found in his using the proscribed symbols of royalty." These pistols, shut up in their cases still loaded, abundantly testify that Robespierre did not shoot himself.

At this instant Legendre entered the Salle, and, approaching the prostrate body of his enemy, apostrophised it in a theatrical voice and manner. "Ha, ha! tyrant," said he with a gesture of defiance, "you, for whom only yesterday the republic was not vast enough, are now contented with about two feet in width upon a little table!" Robespierre must have listened with horror and contempt to the voice of a man who had so frequently been awed into perfect silence by a single glance from himself, and whose fulsome adulations, after the death of Danton, had so greatly disgusted him: although lying motionless, and apparently unconscious, he both heard and saw all that was passing around him. The blood that flowed from his wounds coagulated in his mouth; regaining a little strength, he stanched this blood with the fur that covered the case of his pistols; his dim but still observing eye wandered among the crowd as though seeking some friendly countenance from whom he might hope to obtain either justice or compassion; but vain was the search: horror alone was imprinted on every face, and the wretched man shuddered, and closed his eyes. The heat of the chamber was most oppressive: a burning fever glowed on the cheeks of Robespierre, while streams of perspiration streamed from his brow: no hand was extended to assist him. They had placed beside him, on the table, a cup of vinegar, and a sponge. From time to time he moistened the sponge, and applied it to his lips.

After this long exposure at the entrance of the Salle, from whence the fallen man could hear the vehement language employed against himself by all who spoke from the tribune, he was removed to the Committee of General Safety, where Billaud, Collot, and Vadier, his most implacable enemies, awaited to go through the form of his examination; but he replied only by looks. His interrogators shortened his misery and their own gratification. Robespierre was then conveyed to the Hôtel Dieu, where his wounds were examined and dressed. Among the wounded taken there, he found Couthon received as lame and infirm, Henriot, whose limbs were frightfully mutilitated by his fall from the window, and his own brother, whose fracture had been reduced. When the surgeon had attended to all, the party was transferred to the Conciergerie, and placed all together in the same dungeon, where Saint-Just awaited them beside the corpse of Lebas.

At his entry into the Conciergerie, Saint-Just had encountered General Hoche, whom he had himself ordered into confinement but a few weeks previously; but Hoche, instead of insulting a fallen enemy, cordially pressed his hand; then stood aside, with downcast looks, to allow the young proconsul to pass. So true it is that noble minds respect misfortune even when it affects those who have caused their own downfal.

The mayor, Fleuriot-Lescot, Payan, Dumas, Vivier, president of the Jacobins, old Lavalette, Duplay, his wife and daughters, the guests of Robespierre, all at first taken to the Luxembourg, were now brought also to the Conciergerie.

At three o'clock the whole party was led or carried, as necessity required, before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The judges and juries were composed of the same men who only a few hours previously were ready to consign to death all who were inimical to the very individuals they were now assembled to sacrifice.

Fouquier-Tinville read the extraordinary decrees with his accustomed tone and manner, confining himself to attesting the legality of the instruments he held in his hand; but his self-possession did not go far enough to permit his raising his eyes on Dumas, his colleague in the Revolutionary Tribunal, or on Robespierre, his patron.

As the clock struck six, the carts appointed to convey the condemned to the scaffold drew up at the foot of the grand staircase. Robespierre, his brother, Couthon, Henriot, and Lebas, were merely the mangled remains of men; they were tied by the arms, legs or trunk, to the bottom of the first vehicle. The jolting of the clumsy machine, as it rumbled over the stones, drew from the agonised creatures within shrieks of pain and dreadful groans; — they were taken through the longest and most populous streets of Paris. Every window, door, and balcony — even the roofs of the houses, were crowded with spectators, of whom the principal part were women dressed as for a fête; these clapped their hands joyfully as the procession passed, and seemed to fancy they were expiating the enormities of the reign of terror by execrating him who had bestowed his own name on it. The cart was beset by the children and friends of former victims shouting, "Kill him! Kill him! Let the guillotine do its work on him!" While the people, preserving a gloomy silence, looked on without any demonstration of either satisfaction or regret, groups of children, who had been deprived of their fathers — women, whose husbands had been torn from them, alone broke through the file of *gens d'armes*, and clinging to the wheels and axles of the carts, loaded Robespierre with bitter imprecations, as though fearing that death would cheat them of their revenge and exultation. The head of Robespierre was bound with a blood-stained handkerchief, that supported his chin, and was tied over his hair, leaving only one of his cheeks, his forehead, and eyes visible. The *gens d'armes* who escorted him pointed him out to the people by a contemptuous motion of the point of their sabres. The unfortunate object of these humiliations turned away his head and shrugged up his shoulders, as though commiserating the error of those who attributed to him alone all the crimes committed in his name. The whole of his intellect seemed centered in his eyes, while his attitude indicated resignation and not fear: the mystery that had veiled his life shrouded his thoughts, and he died without one last word.

XIV. Before the house of the artisan where he had resided, the father, mother, and children all in prison, a party of women stopped the procession, and commenced dancing round the cart. A lad carried a pailful of blood, obtained from some butchers, and dipping a broom into it, bespattered the walls of the house. Robespierre closed his eyes at this spectacle, unable to look at the insult offered to the friendly roof under which he had introduced so much wretchedness. This was the only indication of feeling he manifested during his six and thirty hours' suffering.

The same evening these furies broke into the prison where the wife of Duplay was confined, strangled her, and then hung her up to the iron rod of the curtains.

The procession again moved on towards the scaffold. Couthon was absorbed in thought; the younger Robespierre in great agony. The shaking of the vehicle, by disturbing the newly set bone of his leg, wrung from him involuntary cries of pain. The countenance of Henriot was besmeared with blood, which gave him the appearance of some drunken object, picked up in the kennel; his uniform had been taken off, and his under garments were all soiled with mud. Saint-Just, on the contrary, was neatly, though plainly dressed; his hair had been cut short, and his pale features were impressed with calm resignation, while his whole manner was equally removed from any appearance of haughtiness or abjectness. It was evident he looked beyond the scaffold into eternity. Conscious that he died from a faithful adherence to his principles, he reproached not fate, but contented himself with the reflection that he laid down his life for his master and the mission intrusted to him. Singular and imperfect being, Saint-Just possessed mere intelligence and the passions of the mind, while heart was wanting alike to his nature and his theory. The want of that organ left his conscience without an accuser, and he died execrated and detested, without feeling himself guilty. When reviewing the character of Saint-Just, we are struck with surprise to find so much dogmatism with so much youth; such fanaticism in one so liberal; so much of conscientious feeling in one so impassible.

Having reached the base of the statue of Liberty, the executioners carried the wounded men to the platform of the guillotine. Not one of them addressed a word or a reproach to the people; they read their doom too clearly in the unmoved countenances of the spectators. Robespierre mounted the ladder with a firm step. Before the knife was loosened, the executioners pulled off the bandage which enveloped his face, in order to prevent the linen from deadening the blow of the axe. The agony occasioned by this drew from the wretched sufferer a cry of anguish that was heard to the opposite side of the Place de la Revolution; then followed a silence like that of the grave, interrupted, at intervals, by a dull, sullen noise; the guillotine fell, and the head of Robespierre rolled into the basket. The crowd held their breath for some seconds, then burst into a loud and unanimous cheering.

Saint-Just then appeared standing on the scaffold. His tall, slight figure, head cast down, and arms tightly pinioned, rendered him an object of commiseration, as his feet were bathed in the blood of his master. He died at the age of twenty-six years and two days, without opening his lips, and carrying his sentiments with him to the grave.

XV. Such was the end of Robespierre and his party, surprised and immolated by the very manœuvre which he had planned to bring back the terror to the law, the Revolution to order, and the republic to unity. Overthrown by men, some better and some worse than himself, he had the unutterable misfortune of dying the same day on which the terror ended, and thus of accumulating on his name the blood of punishments he would fain have spared, and the curses of victims he would willingly have saved.

His death was the date, and not the cause of the cessation of terror. Deaths would have ceased by his triumphs, as they did by his death. Thus did divine justice dishonour his repentance, and cast misfortune on his good intentions, making of his tomb a gulf filled up. It has made of his memory an enigma of which history trembles to pronounce the solution, fearing to do him injustice if she brand it as crime, or to create horror if she should term it virtue! To be just and instructive, we must unhesitatingly associate these two words, which have a repugnancy to unite, and compose a complex word, or rather it is impossible to designate what we must despair to define. This man was, and must ever remain, shadowy—undefined.

There is a design in his life, and this design is vast — the reign of reason, by the medium of democracy. There is a momentum, and that momentum is divine — it was a thirst after the truth and justice in the laws. There is an action, and that action is meritorious — it is the struggle for life and death against vice, lying, and despotism. There is a devotion, and this devotion is as constant, absolute, as an antique immolation — it was the sacrifice of himself, of his youth, his repose, his happiness, his ambition, his life, his memory, and his work. Finally, there is a means, and that means is, in turns, execrable or legitimate — it is popularity. He caressed the people by its ignoble tendencies, he exaggerated suspicion, excited envy, sharpened anger, envenomed vengeance. He opened the veins of the social body to cure the disease; but he allowed life to flow out, pure or impure, with indifference, without casting himself between the victims and the executioners. He did not desire evil, and yet accepted it. He surrendered to what he believed the pressure of situation, the heads of the king, the queen, their innocent sister. He yielded to pretended necessity the head of Vergniaud: to fear and domination the head of Danton. He allowed his name to serve, for eighteen months, as the standard of the scaffold, and the justification of death. He hoped subsequently to redeem that which is never redeemed — present crime, through the purity, the holiness of future institutions. He was intoxicated with the perspective of public felicity, whilst France was palpitating on the block. He desired to extirpate, with the iron blade, all the ill-growing roots of the social soil. He believed himself to be the right end of Providence, because he had the feeling and plan of it in his imagination. He put himself in the place of God. He desired to be the exterminating and creative genius of the Revolution. He forgot that if every man thus made a deity of himself, there could only remain one man on the globe at the end of the world, and that this last man would be the assassin of all the others! He besmeared with blood the purest doctrines of philosophy. He inspired the future with a dread of the people's reign, repugnance to the institution of the republic, a doubt of liberty. He fell at last in his first struggle with the terror, because he did not acquire, by resisting it at first, the right of power to quell it. His principles were sterile and fatal like his proscriptions, and he died exclaiming (with the despondency of Brutus), "the republic perishes with me!" He was in effect, at that moment, the soul of the republic, and it vanished with his last sigh. If Robespierre had maintained himself pure, and made no concessions to the wild schemes of demagogues up to this crisis of weariness and remorse, the republic would have survived, grown young again, and triumphed in him. It sought a ruler, whilst he only appeared as its accomplice, and was preparing to become its Cromwell.

Robespierre's crowning misfortune in perishing was not so much in falling and dragging down the republic with him, as in not bequeathing to democracy in the memory of the man who had desired to personify it most faithfully, one of those pure, bright, immortal figures, which avenge a cause for the abandonment of fortune, and protest against ruin by the unqualified and unreserved admiration with which they inspire posterity. The republic required a *Cato of Utica* in the martyrology of its founders. Robespierre was only its *Marius*, without his sword. The democracy required a glory whose rays should be for ever resplendent with the name of some man from its cradle. Robespierre only reached undeviating firmness of purpose, unquestionable incorruptibility, and unbounded remorse. This was the punishment of this man—the punishment of the people—of the time as of the future. A cause is frequently but the name of an individual. The cause of the democracy should not be condemned to veil or justify that of Robespierre. The type of democracy should be magnanimous, generous, clement, and indisputable as truth.

XVI. The great epoch of the Revolution ended with Robespierre and Saint-Just. The second race of revolutionists began. The republic fell from tragedy into intrigue, from spiritualism into ambition, from fanaticism into cupidity. At this moment when every thing grows small, let us learn to contemplate what was so vast.

The Revolution had only lasted five years. These five years are five centuries for France. Never perhaps on this earth, at any period since the commencement of the Christian era, did any country produce, in so short a space of time, such an eruption of ideas, men, natures, characters, geniuses, talents, catastrophes, crimes, and virtues, as during these convulsive throes of the social and political future which is called by the name of France. Neither the age of Cæsar and Octavius at Rome, nor the age of Charlemagne amongst the Gauls and in Germany, nor the age of Pericles in Athens, nor of Leo X. in Italy, nor of Louis XIV. in France, nor of Cromwell in England. It was as if the earth were in labour to produce a progressive order of societies, and made an effort of fecundity comparable to the energetic work of regeneration which Providence desired to accomplish. Men were born like the instantaneous personifications of things which should think, speak, or act. Voltaire, good sense; Jean Jacques Rousseau, the ideal; Condorcet, calculation; Mirabeau, impetuosity; Vergniaud, impulse; Danton, audacity; Marat, fury; Madame Roland, enthusiasm; Charlotte Corday, vengeance; Robespierre, Utopia: Saint-Just, the fanaticism of the Revolution. Behind these came the secondary men of each of these groups, forming a body which the Revolution detached after having united it, and the members of which she brake, one by one, as useless implements. Light shone from every point of the horizon at once; darkness fell back; prejudices were cast off; consciences were freed; tyrannies trembled, and the people rose. Thrones crumbled: intimidated Europe ceased to strike, and, stricken herself, receded in order to gaze on this grand spectacle at a greater distance. This deadly struggle for the cause of human reason is a thousand times more glorious than the victories of the armies which succeeded to it. It acquired for the world inalienable truths, instead of acquiring for a nation the precarious increase of provinces. It enlarged the domain of mind, instead of expanding the limits of a people. Martyrdom is its glory; its ambition virtue. We are proud to be of a race of men to whom Providence has permitted the conception of such ideas, and to be the child of an age which has impressed its impulses on such advances of the human mind. We glorify France in its intelligence, its character, its soul, its blood! The heads of these men fall one by one; some justly, others unjustly; but they fall in consummation of the work. We accuse or absolve; weep or curse them. Individuals are innocent or guilty, loved or hateful, victims or executioners. The working out is vast, and the idea soars above the instruments, like the ever pure cause over the horrors of the field of battle. After five years, the Revolution is nothing but a vast cemetery. Over the tomb of each of these victims is inscribed a word which characterises it. Over one, *Philosophy;* another, *Eloquence;* another, *Genius;* another, *Courage:* here *Crime*, there *Virtue:* but over one and all is written, "Died for posterity," and, "Workman in the cause of humanity."

A nation should unquestionably bewail its dead, and not console itself for one head unjustly and hatefully sacrificed; but it should not regret its blood when it has flowed to bring forth everlasting truths. God hath placed this price on the germinating and bursting forth of his designs on man. Ideas vegetate from human blood. Revelations descend from scaffolds. All religions derive their divinity from martyrdom. Let us then pardon the sons of those who struggled or were victims. Let us become reconciled over their tombs, in order that we may renew the interrupted work! Crime has lost all by mingling in the ranks of the republic. To contend is not to immolate. Let us take away the crime from the cause of the people, as a weapon which has wounded its hand, and changed liberty into despotism; let us not seek to justify the scaffold by the country, and the proscriptions by liberty; let us not harden the feelings of the age by the sophistry of revolutionary energy; let us leave human nature its heart, that is the surest and most infallible of its principles; and let us resign ourselves to the condition of human affairs. The History of the Revolution is glorious and sad as the morrow of a victory, and the eve of a battle. But if this history be full of mourning, it is also full of faith. It resembles the antique drama, in which, whilst the narrator gives the recital, the chorus of the people sings the glory, bewails the victims, and raises a hymn of consolation and hope to God!

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